

By identifying people who suffer with mental health difficulties and who could be vulnerable or at risk, police and partners are able to provide the right access to support services, reducing the demand on emergency services and improving the services individuals receive.

The three key elements include; introducing mental health nurses into the Constabulary's Command and Control Room (CCR); the Mental Health Triage Car; and placing Liaison and Diversion Practitioners (L&D) within Police Investigation Centres (PICs).

*Chief Superintendent David Skevington, said "A significant part of our work is around understanding our demand and making sure that our resources are in the right places to provide the best response. We know that we receive a lot of calls linked to vulnerable people, many of whom are suffering with mental health difficulties..."*

*"Our work with the NSFT will help us not only lower the amount of repeat mental health related incidents from individuals, but start people who need mental health support on a suitable care and treatment pathway. By using this three-pronged approach, we are stopping the cycle for anyone coming into or already in police custody and getting them the help they so desperately need.*

*"If a person is reported to us as being aggressive and threatening in a town centre, this will first be picked up by the nurses in the control room and flagged as a potential mental health related incident. The Triage Car will take a mental health nurse to the incident to talk to the person, and if they are taken into custody, they will be given support via the Liaison and Diversion Practitioners in a police investigation centre."*

*"Using the knowledge and expertise of mental health staff means that those in need of support are receiving it faster at the time when they perhaps most need it, using better placed resources and providing enhanced support."*

The Mental Health Triage Car was introduced as a year-long pilot scheme in April 2014, between Suffolk Police and NSFT, along with support from the East Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group. This has been extended to continue after the scheme was deemed successful.

The car involves a mental health practitioner attending incidents along with a police officer when people appear to be experiencing mental health difficulties. The practitioners can make an initial assessment, and consult any health records to ensure the person's mental health needs are taken into account.

Mental health nurses have been introduced into the Suffolk Police CCR to give advice to local officers on the management of incidents concerning people who appear to be experiencing mental health difficulties. This will improve the way these incidents are managed and assist the police in directing people to health and social care services where appropriate.