



REFERRALS POLICY

Document control Summary:

Title	Referrals Policy
Purpose of Document	This policy is designed to provide guidance for the procedure and practice in dealing with a new referral
Electronic File Reference	
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Reviewed by	St. Martins Service Users and Front line staff
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REFERRALS AND SELECTION POLICY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 St Martin of Tours Housing Association provides supportive accommodation and floating support services for people, many of whom may have a forensic history, mental health issue or drink/drug related problems. Accommodation and floating support is also provided to vulnerable young people. The Association has a range of housing provision from registered care homes and hostel accommodation, to shared and self-contained housing. The aim of the Association is to move service users into more independent accommodation in the community.
- 1.2 All applicants must require some form of care and support. For this reason, the Association has identified priority groups who will benefit most from the services provided.
- 1.3 This document sets out the criteria used to select service users and the procedure for referrals to be made to the Association. There is an appeals procedure at each of these stages.
- 1.4 St Martins aims for equality of opportunity in all aspects of its provision. This policy and procedure aims to ensure that from the point at which someone is referred to the Association through the period of their stay to the point at which they leave, procedures operate, fairly and effectively, targeting all those who will benefit most from the Associations' services.
- 1.5 The purpose of this policy is set out as follows:
 - The basic Eligibility criteria to be used in the referral and assessments of applicants – referral criteria for each project are attached at the end of this document.
 - The process for the assessment of applicants for Forensic Care homes and supported housing and floating support services
 - The process of appeal in relation to a decision to not accept a referral following the initial assessment of applicants

2. Eligibility Criteria

- 2.0 Eligibility criteria will differ from project to project. It is essential that managers refer to their criteria based on their contractual requirements and ensure that the applicant fits the relevant criteria for that project. Basic and support needs, and risk criteria must be taken into consideration to decide whether the project has the ability to meet the individual's needs.
- 2.1 Decisions to accept or not to accept an applicant into a project must be made in a fair and transparent manner and must be in line with St Martins Equality and Diversity policy.

3. Referral and selection process

Stage 1 – Initial Enquiry

- 3.1.1 On receiving an initial enquiry, Referral Application Packs will be sent out within 1-2 working days. The pack will include
- a Referral Application Form,
 - a Brochure or leaflet describing the service
 - a Data Sharing form
 - a Fair Access form
 - a Recovery leaflet

Stage 2 – Application

- 3.2 The completed application needs to be returned to St Martins with the following documents to enable us to make a comprehensive assessment:
- A current risk assessment
 - A current support plan, or a copy of the most recent CPA minutes (where relevant)
 - Where relevant, a psychiatric history report, and/or a probation report, including local reports
 - Contact details of Social Workers attached to minors
- 3.3 On receipt of the referral, an acknowledgement will be sent within two working days and an assessment will be arranged within 7 working days
- 3.4 Following the assessment, a written report detailing the decision, will be sent within 5 working days.
- 3.5 Project managers must inform service managers or in their absence, the Director of Operations of any unsuccessful application. In the forensic projects, the Director of Operations will make the final decision.

- 3.6 **Consent** - A Data Protection consent form will be enclosed in the application pack. In line with the Data Protection Act 1998, we seek to ensure that where information about an individual is shared, that the individual's consent has been obtained. We are committed to working with other professionals involved in an individual's care and/or support and we ask that the applicant consent to us sharing this information. This list of people will vary with each applicant however we would expect it to include the referring agents, care co-ordinator, psychiatrist, CPN, GP, Psychologist and/or probation officer. This list may be extended with the consent of the applicant.

Given the importance of consent and information sharing we will be unable to process an application without this signed form, unless we receive written confirmation that the applicant does not have the capacity to give consent.

- 3.7 **Fair Access** – A Fair Access monitoring form will also be enclosed in the application pack, which the applicant is asked to complete. This is voluntary however this information will enable us to ensure that we are dealing fairly with applications in line with our Equality & Diversity policy. This information will be for monitoring purposes only.
- 3.8 **Recovery and Social Inclusion** – St Martins works within a Recovery ethos and seeks to involve the service user in all aspects of their support. Completed application forms will be stored in the individual's file and will be available for them to read on request. However, third party information is treated as confidential from the service user. We urge referrers to discuss the contents of the referral form with the applicant before sending it to St Martins.
- 4.0 **Stage 3 – Assessment**
- 4.1 An **Initial assessment** will be carried out within 10 working days.
- 4.2 The project manager will ensure that all the basic and support criteria have been met and that all the information has been provided.
- 4.3 Key worker allocation – Once we have all the necessary information, the Project manager will identify a member of staff to undertake the full assessment. This person will then normally act as the applicant's key worker should they be accepted. This will ensure a smooth transition into the project.
- 4.4 Support Needs assessment – we will assess the service user's support needs in line with the project eligibility criteria to ensure that we can provide support to match this individual's needs.
- 4.5 Risk Assessment – a comprehensive risk assessment will need to be completed to ensure that we are able to manage any presented risks. St Martins embracing
- 4.6 Assessment meeting – After the project manager and key worker have discussed the application, the key worker will write to service user inviting them to an assessment meeting. The meeting will take place no longer than 10 working days from the receipt of the referral. In some projects, the key-worker will visit the service user to do the assessment and then invite them to visit the project. This visit is not a formal interview but intended for the service

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user to get to know the project as well as staff getting to know the applicant. In some cases, for example floating support services, two member of the team will carry out the assessment. One function of this meeting will be to obtain clarification of any information given on the referral application:

- The support needs
- Understanding the Recovery Philosophy
- Service Users own understanding of mental health needs and how these are best managed
- Feelings about moving in
- Feelings about receiving support and commitment to engage with support
- Any risks presented by and to the individual
- Strategies in place for managing these risks
- Arrangements for on-going support from external agencies
- Transfer arrangements (e.g. moving to a new area and/or engage with local services eg. a new community mental health team – CMHT)

4.6 Team Discussion – Following the assessment meeting the application will be discussed at the next team meeting. This ensures that all team members are aware of the issues relating to the application and have an opportunity to contribute to the assessment process. This team assessment will take place at the next team meeting following the assessment.

OR

4.7 The project manager and key worker will discuss the assessment and the project manager will make a decision. If the decision is to not accept the referral application, they will need to forward these reasons to the service manager, who will review the information and make a final decision.

4.8 **Decision** – There will be 6 possible decisions:

5 Successful (accept and move-in) – where the applicant meets all the criteria and there is a vacancy

Successful (accept and placed on a waiting list) – where the applicant meets all the criteria but there are no current vacancies

- Unsuccessful (Basic) – the basic criteria (such as age, gender, etc) has not been met
- Unsuccessful (support) – the criteria for support needs has not been met
- Unsuccessful (support assessment) – where it is felt that the support needs cannot be adequately met by the project
- Unsuccessful (risk assessment) – the risk management strategies are not sufficient for the safety of the applicant or the project

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Once a decision has been made we will endeavour to communicate with the applicant and referrer within two working days – this will be **confirmed in writing**.

Where the decision reached is to accept the applicant for the project the letter will detail what needs to happen next to facilitate move-in. Where the decision is that the application was unsuccessful, the decision letter will state clearly the reasons why the applicant or application has not been accepted to the project and outline the appeal process.

5. Monitoring

5.1 To monitor the application process and fair access to the project, the Fair Access monitoring form will record all personal details pertaining to the applicant including age, gender, ethnicity and sexuality. It will also record the decisions pertaining to each application. The monitoring form will also detail the dates of the process, to ensure that they are in line with the timescales of this policy. The monitoring form should be kept in the Service User's notes or the unsuccessful referrals file and a copy of it should be maintained in the Shared Drive in the project folder.

6. Appeals and complaints

6.1 Where an applicant or referrer is unhappy with a decision, they have a right of appeal, by writing to the project/service manager. For further information please refer to St Martins Complaint Policy and Procedure, for the stages of appeals and timescales. Any member of staff will be happy to forward a copy to you immediately upon request.

7. Policy Review

7.1 Service users are involved in the development and agreement of all policy at St Martins. Policy statements in this document have been agreed with them. This policy will be reviewed at least every three years.