



FACT SHEET

for service providers

Model of Care Standard

The National Safety and Quality Digital Mental Health (NSQDMH) Standards aim to improve the quality of digital mental health service provision, and to protect service users and their support people from harm.

The three NSQDMH Standards include 59 actions related to clinical and technical aspects of digital mental health services. They describe the level of care and the safeguards that a digital mental health service should provide.

The Model of Care Standard aims to ensure that service providers have systems in place to make sure that their digital mental health services are based on the best available evidence and best practice. It requires service users, consumers and their support people be provided with information about the services. The Model of Care Standard also makes sure that service providers have systems for minimising harm to service users and others, for effective communication to support coordinated and safe care, and for recognising and responding to acute deterioration in a person's mental state.

Why is this standard important?

A model of care outlines how an organisation delivers a digital mental health service. Service users and their support people use a variety of digital technologies to access digital mental health services, and the model of care may not always be obvious.

For a particular digital mental health service, service users should understand:

- Its purpose and intent
- How it is meant to operate
- What it intends to achieve
- How it is informed by evidence and best practice.

This can help people make an informed choice about using digital mental health services.

Minimising risk in the digital mental health delivery setting is important, including:

- Risk screening, especially relating to the risk of harm, including self-harm and suicide
- Ensuring that an effective response is available, whether your service provides a response directly or by referral to another agency.

Early identification of deterioration in a service user's mental state can be more difficult in a digital setting. A systematic approach will help to ensure that the service recognises deterioration and provides an appropriate response.

Effective communication and documentation are critical to the safety of service users and their support people. You should have systems and processes in place to ensure effective communication at all times. You should also have a process to communicate critical information when there is significant change in a service user's circumstances or care, and when their care is transferred.

If you meet this standard

- The purpose and intent of your digital mental health service is clear to service users, consumers and their support people, and the care delivered is consistent with your model of care.
- Harm to service users and others is minimised.
- Effective and coordinated communication underpins the safety and quality of care.
- You have clear processes for the transition of care.
- Systems are in place to recognise and respond to acute deterioration in mental state.





What can you do to implement this standard?

- Review and strengthen the models of care for your digital mental health services, so they use the best available evidence and practices.
- Provide information to service users and consumers – and, where relevant, their support people – that they can easily understand and which meets their needs.
- Consider your approach to identifying risk of harm and whether you have strategies in place to prevent and manage harm to service users and others.
- Engage with service users, consumers, carers, families and support people to help evaluate your communication systems.
- Consider whether your system for recognising and responding to acute deterioration in mental state provides a safe and effective response.

Find out more

The complete NSQDMH Standards, including the 59 actions, and associated fact sheets and other materials are at www.safetyandquality.gov.au/dmhs.

You can contact the project team for more information at dmhs@safetyandquality.gov.au.

