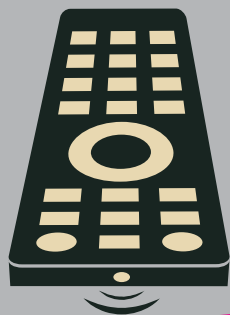


LIFE HAS

NO



Remote

GET UP AND CHANGE IT

YOURSELF

FLOATING  
SUPPORT  
HANDBOOK



*Building futures together*

MACS  
SUPPORTING CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

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# WHAT IS MACS

MACS is set up to work with and support children and young people. We work with young people who haven't had a fair deal and want to support them to try and make things that bit better. As everyone wants something different, MACS work with young people on the things that are important to them. It might be getting out more, making new friends, getting a place to live, sorting out problems or money worries, dealing with stresses or the things that fry your head etc. We do this through 3 Services (each Service has its own info booklet):



## WELLBEING

*Live, Dream, Succeed*

Supporting children and young people to live, dream and succeed with inspiration from volunteers.



## FLOATING SUPPORT

*Building futures together*

Helping young people get and keep a place to live.



## SUPPORTED HOUSING

*Move in to move on*

Working with young people who are leaving care or homeless so they are better prepared to live in their own place down the line.



# 20 20 VISION

STRATEGIC PLAN 2015-2020

## VISION

LIFE IS GREAT FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

## MISSION

TO PROVIDE A RANGE OF SUPPORT SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WHO HAVEN'T HAD A FAIR DEAL IN RELATION TO HOUSING, HOMELESSNESS, MENTAL HEALTH AND PARTICIPATION

## ETHOS

WE NEED EACH OTHER TO MAKE LIFE WORK

## VALUES

WE MAKE OUR OWN CHOICES

WE TAKE RISKS

WE MAKE MISTAKES AND LEARN

WE RECOGNISE OUR DIFFERENCES AND CHALLENGE JUDGEMENTS

## AIMS

GETTING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WHERE THEY WANT TO BE

LED BY YOU

STRENGTH, EXCELLENCE, INNOVATION AND VISION

# INTRODUCTION

This handbook has been designed to give you all the information you need to know about MACS Floating Support. A Floating support worker can explain it all to you and answer any questions you may have. Contact us if you would like to know more.

MACS Floating Support Service was established in 2003 from the Housing Executive's Supporting People programme. The service provides support to young people in Greater Belfast, Lisburn, Colin, Downpatrick and the surrounding areas.

## WHO CAN GET SUPPORT?

- Young people aged 16-25 years old who need support to maintain or access accommodation.

## WHAT KIND OF SUPPORT CAN I GET?

Our service is flexible and based on your needs and it aims to help you establish and maintain interdependent living in the community. It can:

- Help you find accommodation
- Help you to set up and maintain a home
- Assist you to manage finances and benefit claims
- Help you to look after yourself by developing independent living skills

- Support you to gain access to other services
- Link you to your community
- Help to make sure your accommodation is safe and secure
- Help you to build positive relationships and support networks
- Support your emotional wellbeing and mental health

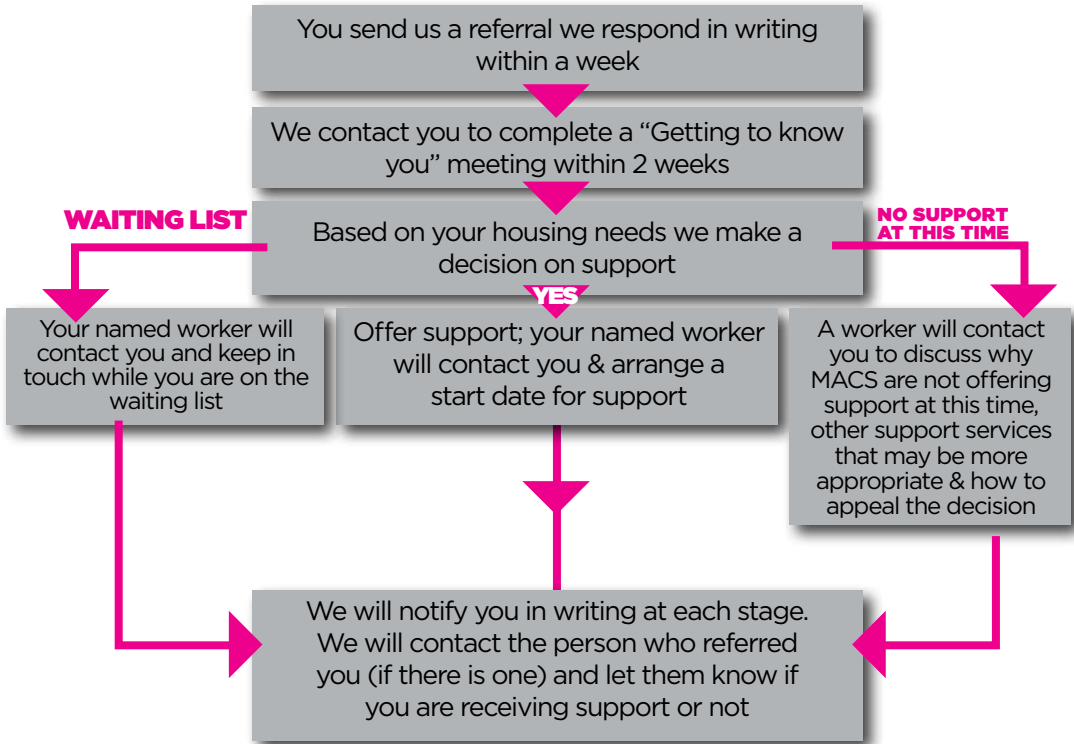
## HOW LONG DOES IT LAST?

We can support you for up to 2 years

## HOW MUCH SUPPORT CAN I GET?

That depends on how much support that you need and you will agree this with your Floating Support worker. We understand that meeting between 9am and 5pm does not suit everyone and we can be flexible and meet you in the evenings and weekends if required.

# HOW DO I GET A FLOATING WORKER?



**\*If you are in crisis your referral will be prioritised.**

## GETTING TO KNOW YOU MEETING

A Getting to know you meeting takes place between you and a Floating Support worker to see if this is the right service for you, and to see if we can provide you with the support you need. We will talk to you about your housing needs. Support networks, living skills, income (to see if you are getting the right money), use of time etc.

You will be asked about whether you feel there are any safety issues around for you or possibly a worker. The worker and you would then agree a keeping safe plan.

The meeting will take at least an hour and you may decide to complete it over a couple of sessions.

Your worker will give you information about MACS Floating Support and you will be offered your own copy of the Getting to know you form to keep.

# WHAT IS A MATCH MEETING?

- A Manager and two Floating Support workers meet to discuss the Getting to know you meetings that have taken place and make a decision about who will receive support and when that will start. (See Referral Process).
- If you do not get offered support from MACS you have the right to appeal the decision and we will offer help to link you in with other services.

# WHY MACS MAY NOT OFFER YOU SUPPORT

- You are currently living outside our catchment area.
- You are currently being supported by another service funded by Supporting People.
- You are outside our age bracket 16-25
- You do not have any housing needs
- You have significant safety concerns (ie. violence, risk of a sexual nature)

# HOW DO I APPEAL A MATCH MEETING DECISION?

A worker will have contacted you to explain why we are not offering you support at this time. If you disagree with this decision, you can contact the manager and request a meeting.

The manager and a worker from another Service will meet you to discuss why you disagree with MACS decision. You can bring someone to this meeting with you (a friend family member, referral). The manager and worker will listen to you and make a decision on support. This meeting will be documented.

If the decision is not to offer support, you can make a complaint your complaint will be dealt with by a manager from another service. MACS Chief Executive Officer will participate in this meeting and a decision will be made on whether or not to offer support based on the extra information provided.

# SUPPORT PLANNING & REVIEWS

A support plan is an agreement you make with your Floating Support worker about the things you want support with to do or achieve. Your support plan changes as things change for you. It will have goals you want to

reach and the steps that you can take to get there.

MACS use the Outcome Star to help you draw up your support plan. You can use the Outcome Star to score your move towards your goals, or just use it to figure out a plan that will work for you. Your support will also include any Keeping safe plans that have been agreed with you.

A review is a discussion on how you are getting on with your support, has it changed or does it need to change. We hold reviews every 6 months, so we are always planning ahead and checking in with how you have been getting on. You can also call a review at any time. The Floating Support Manager may come to one of your reviews to check in with you about the support you are receiving from MACS.

## HARD & SOFT OUTCOMES

It is important that you know MACS is monitored by funders as to whether or not the support we offer makes any difference to young people. The scoring system used in the Outcome Star helps us measure how you feel; do you feel happier, safer, more confident etc. MACS also have our own system called SPIN. We use it to measure outcomes under the headings of;

- Economic Wellbeing
- Enjoy and achieve
- Be healthy
- Stay safe
- Positive contribution (community involvement, participation)

These outcomes are the definite things that you have done, such as finding accommodation, maintaining accommodation, receiving the correct benefits, improving your social and community links.

The headings listed above are known as the 5 higher level outcomes and are the general areas that Government would like people to improve in. Government use these to set targets to be achieved across all the services they fund. So for MACS we hope that the support we provide helps young people to grow and develop in those areas. Floating Support workers update on your hard outcomes 3 times a year and should offer to take you through the SPIN system.

## SUPPORT AGREEMENT

**MACS will:**

- Attend meetings as agreed and let you know if, for any reason, we are not able to keep the meeting.
- Respond to your calls or texts within a 24 hour period between Monday and Friday unless specific arrangements have been put in place
- Be approachable, friendly, caring, supportive and treat you with respect and fairness.
- Offer services that are flexible and responsive to your needs.
- Inform you of the service, how it works, how it can help you and what is expected of you.

- Give you opportunities to voice your opinion on how the service is run.
- Treat all information about you confidentially (Information about you may be shared with other agencies if you or others are unsafe)
- Support you to develop practical skills to maintain accommodation.
- Offer guidance and support in relation to your emotional and physical needs.
- Support you to get into training and employment.
- Work in partnership with other services in order to meet your support needs.

### **MACS expects you to:**

- Attend meetings as agreed and let your worker know if you can't make it.
- Attend meetings "sober" (not under the influence of a substance or alcohol)
- Work towards achieving the goals of your support plan.
- Not to use threatening or abusive language or actions.
- Make a complaint if you are not happy with your support.

## **WHAT A WORKER CANNOT DO?**

MACS Floating Support staff will be professional at all times and that means that they will work to a clear code of practice.

Your worker cannot:

- Give you their personal home/mobile number or email/link up with you on social media
- Give you their home address or take you home.
- Meet you outside office hours or socialise with you.
- Use inappropriate language, particularly of a sexual, homophobic, sectarian aggressive or racist nature.
- Socialise with you outside office hours.
- Act as your guarantor or provide you with a bail address.
- Come into work under the influence of drink or drugs
- Borrow money from you.

We take your safety seriously and if you think your worker is doing something wrong you should contact their manager.



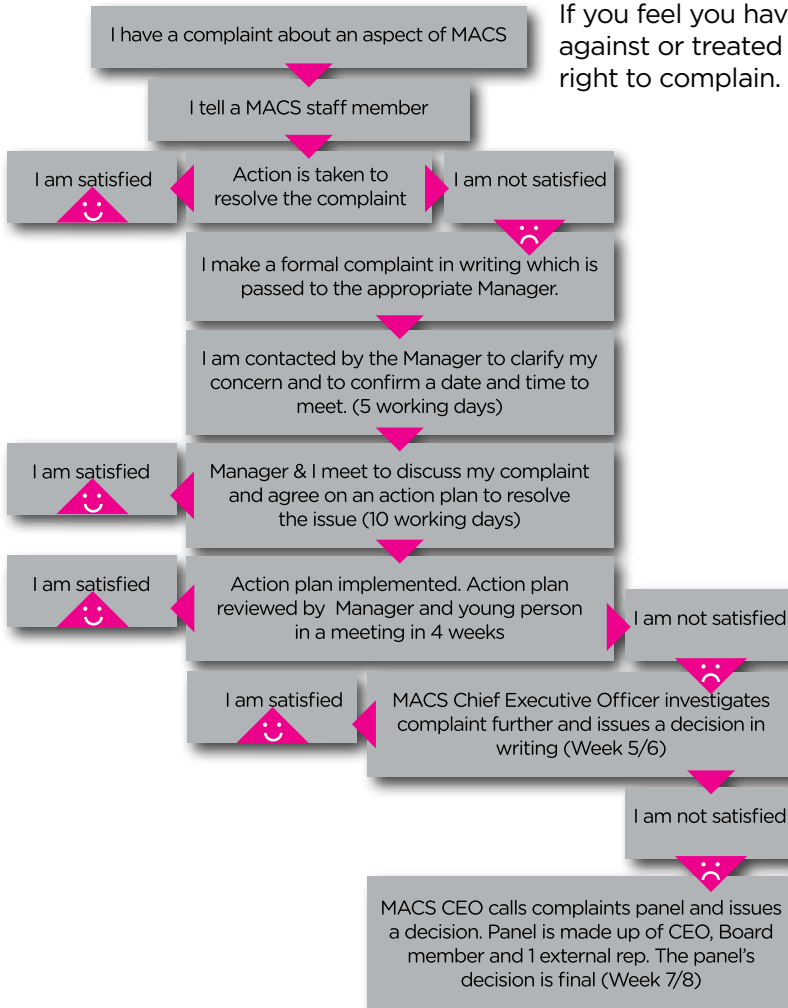
# COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

MACS believe that if you are not happy with how we deliver our Services or you believe you are being unfairly treated, then you have the right to complain. The process for complaining is as follows:

# EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

At MACS we are committed to providing a service that promotes equality. The support you get from us will be based on your needs we will not treat you differently because of disabilities, race, gender, sexuality, culture, educational background, or other factors that you may believe make you feel different to others.

If you feel you have been discriminated against or treated unfairly you have the right to complain.



# POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

MACS have a range of Organisational and Service Specific policies and procedures that exist to promote your rights, safety and wellbeing.

Your support worker will spend time explaining them to you. All young people have the opportunity to change or shape policy and procedures by talking to staff, a manager or by getting involved in MACS “Led by you” project. We are committed to providing you with a Service that safeguards and promotes equality.

# PROTECTION FROM ABUSE

MACS believe you have the right to be protected from abuse or neglect. Therefore it is important for you to understand what abuse is, how to report it and what will happen

# WHAT IS ABUSE?

Abuse can be:

**Physical:** hitting, punching, kicking

**Sexual:** rape, sexual assault, sexual acts without consent.

**Psychological and emotional:** threats of harm, intimidation, harassment, humiliation, blaming, deprivation of contact.

**Financial:** including theft, fraud, exploitation or pressure in connection with any finances; e.g. benefits, wages, possessions.

**Neglect:** including not looking

after physical or medical needs, not accessing appropriate healthcare, withholding food, heating or medication.

**Discrimination or harassment:** based on your culture, disability, gender, racial origin, language, religious beliefs or sexual identity. Social media; abuse, bullying, harassment threats via social media.

# HOW DO I REPORT ABUSE

There may be other things not on this list. If you are worried or if you know or believe that you, or someone else is experiencing abuse it is important to report it as quickly as possible. Your report will be dealt with immediately. You can talk to any staff member or, if you feel you cannot talk to a staff member, you can telephone the PSNI, NIHE, local member of the clergy or the NSPCC Child Protection Helpline: 0808 800 5000. It is important that you tell someone.

# WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Anything that you tell us will be treated with respect. It will not be the subject of gossip. You will be taken seriously.

The worker will make sure they understand the basic details of the suspected abuse. They will inform the Floating Support Manager and assess the immediate safety of the person

concerned. At MACS our role is to support not to investigate and we will pass your concerns on to the relevant agency.

The worker will have to record what you tell them and whatever happens next. The designated officer for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults at MACS is Mary Ryan, Chief Executive Officer, she is based in our Belfast Office Tel: 028 9031 3163.

## PROTECTION OF CHILDREN & VULNERABLE ADULTS

MACS work to protect children and young adults from harm.

If we have any concerns that a child or vulnerable adult is at risk of being harmed we have a 'Duty to Care' and we **HAVE** to share this information. The information will be shared with the Managers and Social services when required. If you are a parent we also have a 'Duty to Care' for your children.

## ON CALL

On Call is a service offered to young people at MACS in a time of extreme stress or crisis. A named member of staff will be available by phone even when the office is closed, late at night or at a weekend. On Call is an extra support service that needs to be agreed in advance.

## SMOKING POLICY

It is the policy of MACS that all our workplaces are smoke-free. All our employees, young people and volunteers have a right to work in a smoke-free environment.

## LED BY YOU; YOUNG PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION

At MACS we value and encourage your participation in all aspects of our work. We want to hear what you think and do something about it. We will provide opportunities for you to be involved at all levels in MACS through our Led by you project. We will ensure you have a real say in how we work with you. We understand participation is not for everyone and it is ok if you do not want to get involved.

Your Floating Support worker should encourage you to participate and have your say. Among the ways you can participate are: to get training and sit on the interviews panels for recruiting staff and volunteers, be included in service reviews, the shadow board, become a young leader.

We have a range of ways you can get more involved in MACS. You can get a copy of our Participation Strategy from any office or from our website. We also have a number of ways that you can give us feedback on the work we do;

# GROUP ACTIVITIES

All the Floating Support teams provide a range of group activities to let you meet other young people from across the organisation. Activities may include a visit from the housing rights, or benefits office, or a games night or trip out. The young people attending the group agree their own programme of activities.

We arrange visits between offices and participate in organisational events with other services at MACS.

When you finish your support with MACS there are still opportunities for you to continue to be involved via “Led by you”

# YOUR FILES

At MACS Floating Support you will have your own file. In this file we will keep a record of all the work you do with your worker and any other information you would like recorded; for example, copies of applications or important letters. These files contain typed and handwritten documents. They are kept in a filing cabinet and on computer file. We also use an online hard outcomes monitoring system called SPIN.

Your worker will explain these system and tell you what Data Protection is, and we will ask you to sign a form to say that you understand your rights. You should read what is written about you by MACS staff. Staff have a responsibility to ask you to read

your file and sign that you have read it. You can also choose to write your own contact sheets with your Floating Support Worker. You can ask to see your files at anytime. Your file is held securely in the office base.

# USEFUL CONTACTS

If housing is a problem for you or if you are homeless, your first stop should be the Northern Ireland Housing Executive  
**034 4892 0900**

If you need assistance ‘out of hours’ (outside normal office hours including weekends and Public holidays),  
**028 95049 999**  
**Please use this number in an emergency or crisis situation only.**

## EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION

Flax Foyer (self referral only if 18+)  
028 9059 3301

Hosford House  
028 9046 3482

Inverary House  
028 9065 3482

Life House (pregnant or have a child under 5) 01926 312 272

Morning Star House  
028 9033 3482

Ormeau Centre  
028 9023 8091

Regina Coeli House  
028 9061 2471

Rosemount House (alcohol)  
028 9077 9740

Salvation Army Lifehouse  
028 9032 0320

Simon Community helpline  
0800 171 2222

Utility Street Hostel  
028 9032 1132

Welcome Organisation Crisis facility  
028 9024 0424

## **HOUSING ADVICE**

Housing Rights Service 028 9024 5640  
[www.housingadviceni.org](http://www.housingadviceni.org)

Mortgage Debt Advice Service  
030 0323 0310  
[mdas@housingrights.org.uk](mailto:mdas@housingrights.org.uk)

## **BENEFITS ADVICE**

Benefit freephone number:  
08000224250

Finance Support (including crisis loan,  
advance payment and discretionary  
support) - 08005872750

## **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE REFUGES**

24 Hour Domestic Violence Helpline  
0808 802 1414

TEXT: SUPPORT - 07797 805 839  
This helpline is open to anyone affected  
by domestic violence regardless of  
gender,  
sexuality, etc. If appropriate, you will be  
referred onto a refuge (available  
throughout NI)

Selah House Carrickfergus  
028 9336 3188

Men's Advisory Project helpline  
N.Ireland 028 9024 1929

## **OUTREACH & OTHER SERVICES**

Multi Dsiciplinary Homeless Support  
Team (multiple need)  
Belfast 028 9033 0433

Homeless Nursing Service  
Belfast 028 9504 9554

Homeplus NI (outreach & drop-in)  
Belfast 028 9031 1836  
Welcome Organisation (outreach &  
drop in) Belfast 028 9024 0424  
Outreach 07894 931 047

SVDP  
Castlewellan 07858230269  
Newcastle 07738837950

Fountain Food Bank  
07444015883

## **OUT OF HOURS SERVICES**

OUT OF HOURS GP / SOCIAL WORK  
North & West Belfast  
028 9074 4447

South & East Belfast  
028 9079 6220

Northern Trust Area  
028 2566 3500

Lisburn & Downpatrick  
9260 2204

North Down & Ards  
9182 2344

Southern Trust area  
028 3839 9201

Western Trust area  
028 7186 5195

## **REGIONAL OUT OF HOURS SOCIAL WORK SERVICE**

028 95049 999

## **CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE**

Childline  
0800 1111

Children's Law Centre  
0808 808 5678

Housing Rights Service  
028 9024 5640

NSPCC (if you are worried about a child) TEXT 88858 0808 800 5000

VOYPIC Help line (leaving care)  
084 5074 2942

MACS Supporting Children & Young People (Head office)  
028 9031 3163

## **CONCERNED ABOUT A CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON'S SAFETY? GATEWAY SERVICES:**

Belfast Trust  
028 9050 7000

Northern Trust  
030 0123 4333

South Eastern Trust  
030 0100 0300

Southern Trust  
080 0783 7745

Western Trust  
028 7131 4090

## **REGIONAL OUT OF HOURS SOCIAL WORK SERVICE**

028 95049 999

## **FOREIGN NATIONALS**

Bryson One Stop Service  
(asylum / refugees)  
028 9031 5744

Homeplus NI (drop-in)  
028 9031 1836

Migrant Centre NI  
028 9043 8962

## **HELPLINES**

Samaritans  
Freephone 116 123

LifeLine NI  
0808 808 8000

Parenting NI  
0808 801 0722

Rainbow Project (lesbian, gay, bi & trans support)  
028 9031 9030

Traveller Community  
An Munia Tober  
028 9043 8265

Traveller Floating Support Service  
028 9043 6463

## **MORE CONTACTS HERE**

**This information can be accessed online, along with additional contacts. Or visit:**  
**[www.chni.org.uk/advicepost.html](http://www.chni.org.uk/advicepost.html)**





[www.macsni.org](http://www.macsni.org)

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