

# Mental Health Law Briefing

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## National Mental Health Development Unit Announced

The Government have recently announced that the National Institute for Mental Health in England ("NIMHE") will be succeeded, with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009, by a new Agency, to be called the National Mental Health Development Unit. This is all part of Lord Darzi's Next Stage Review and takes account of the need to provide more personalised services. Accordingly, from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009 the ten strategic health authorities will oversee the regional and local delivery of new Mental Health policies, supported by the new Unit.

Information from the Department of Health has confirmed that the new Unit will continue to co-ordinate support for key mental health projects such as:

- Improving access to talking therapies
- Promoting equalities in mental health services for different groups based on race, gender and age

- Promoting social inclusion and social justice for people with mental health problems
- Promoting well-being and mental health for the whole population, and
- Supporting effective mental health commissioning

The new Unit will be led by Dr Ian McPherson, previously head of NIMHE.

Announcing the establishment of the new Unit, Care Services Minister Phil Hope MP said:

*"The National Mental Health Development Unit will make sure that mental health services around the country continue to go from strength to strength... we must actively promote public mental health and wellbeing, as well as spreading best practice and maintaining world class mental health services everywhere. The National Mental Health Development Unit will help us to do this".*

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Readers are advised to take specific advice before acting in reliance on the matters set out in this briefing.

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