Appendix D: OPEL 2024 to 2026 Mental health parameters V2.0

This guide defines each parameter within the mental health (MH) service pillar of the Integrated OPEL Framework 2024 to 2026, to ensure they can be consistently applied across all relevant processes and activities.

Please note that it must be read in conjunction with the Integrated OPEL Framework 2024 to 2026, which provides the overarching structure and context within which these parameters need to operate.

For queries relating to this guide, please contact the iUEC national team at [england.uec-operations@nhs.net](mailto:England.uec-operations@nhs.net%20V)

**MH-OPEL parameter table**

| **Parameters** | **0 points** | **1 point** | **2 points** | **3 points** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. Bed occupancy – adult mental health | ≤85% | >85-95% | >95-98% | >98% |
| 1. Bed occupancy – older adult mental health | ≤85% | >85-95% | >95-98% | >98% |
| 1. Patients clinically ready for discharge | ≤10% | >10-15% | >15-20% | >20% |
| 1. Inappropriate out of area placements | 0 | 1 – 5 | 6 – 15 | >15 |
| 1. Planned mental health discharges | >3% | >2-3% | >1-2% | ≤1% |
| 1. Achieved mental health discharges | >3% | >2-3% | >1-2% | ≤1% |
| 1. Mental health beds closed to admission – adult and older adult | ≤0.5% | >0.5-1.5% | >1.5-3% | >3% |
| 1. Patients waiting for mental health inpatient admission (percentage of beds) | ≤1% | >1-5% | >5-10% | >10% |

**MH OPEL normalised score thresholds**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **MH OPEL** | **MH normalised OPEL score** |
| OPEL 1 | 0 – 15 |
| OPEL 2 | >15 – 40 |
| OPEL 3 | >40–70 |
| OPEL 4 | >70-100 |

1. Bed occupancy – adult mental health (percentage)

This is the percentage of all adult acute MH inpatients beds that are occupied at time of OPEL assessment.

**Numerator:** Number of adult (not older adult) MH beds that are occupied at time of OPEL assessment, including externally commissioned adult beds, adult beds allocated to patients ‘on leave’ or ‘leave beds’.

**Denominator:** Number of open adult mental health (not older adult) beds.

Both numerator and denominator should include Psychiatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU); but exclude any specialist commissioned beds managed at any level i.e. at system provider collaborative, regional or national level. Such as all secure (Forensic) beds, learning disability and autism (LD&A), mother and baby, eating disorders, or rehabilitation, this is not an exhaustive list of such exclusions.

* ≤85% 0 points
* >85–95% 1 point
* >95–98% 2 points
* >98% 3 points

1. Bed occupancy – older adult mental health (percentage)

This is the percentage of older adult MH beds that are occupied at time of OPEL assessment.

**Numerator:** Number of older adult MH (not adult) beds that are occupied at time of OPEL assessment

**Denominator:** Number of open older adult MH (not adult) beds at time of OPEL assessment,

Both numerator and denominator should include Dementia Intensive Care Unit (DICU); but exclude any specialist commissioned beds managed at any level i.e. at system provider collaborative, regional or national level. Such as all secure (Forensic) beds, LD&A, mother and baby, eating disorders, or rehabilitation, this is not an exhaustive list of such exclusions.

* ≤85% 0 points
* >85–95% 1 point
* >95–98% 2 points
* >98% 3 points

1. Patients clinically ready for discharge (CRFD) (percentage)

This is the percentage of open beds that are occupied by patients who are CRFD at time of OPEL assessment. A CRFD patient is defined as one who has been assessed by the multidisciplinary team supporting people, in hospital and out of hospital, as requiring no further assessments, interventions and/or treatments that can only be provided in an inpatient setting.

**Numerator:** Number of adults + older adults in an MH bed who are CFRD at time of OPEL assessment. This includes any patients that are on leave from an inpatient bed.

**Denominator:** Number of adult MH, older adult MH, PICU and DICU beds that are open to admission. Exclude any specialist commissioned beds managed at any level i.e. at system provider collaborative, regional or national level. Such as all secure (Forensic) beds, LD&A, mother and baby, eating disorders, or rehabilitation, this is not an exhaustive list of such exclusions.

* ≤10% 0 points
* >10–15% 1 point
* >15–20% 2 points
* >20% 3 points

1. Inappropriate out of area placements (number)

This is the number of patients at time of OPEL assessment who are placed out of area but do not meet the criteria for appropriate out-of-area placements as set out in [Out of area placements in mental health services for adults in acute inpatient care (GOV.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/oaps-in-mental-health-services-for-adults-in-acute-inpatient-care/out-of-area-placements-in-mental-health-services-for-adults-in-acute-inpatient-care) and [Out of Area Placement (OAPs) Collection - General FAQs - NHS England Digital](https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/clinical-audits-and-registries/oaps-faqs-general). The cadence of OPEL assessment depends on the OPEL level, The minimum timescale and frequency are given in the Integrated OPEL framework 2024 to 2026 and the frequency of submissions in the acute OPEL actions.

* 0 0 points
* 1 – 5 1 point
* 6 – 15 2 points
* >15 3 points

1. Planned mental health discharges (percentage)

This is the percentage of discharges with a planned discharge date for the next day at time of OPEL assessment.

**Numerator:** Number of adult + older adult MH patients with a planned discharge date for the next day, between 00:00 and 23:59 (but note this is not a rolling 24-hour period), at time of OPEL assessment.

**Denominator:** Number of adult MH +older adult MH beds that are open to admission at time of OPEL assessment.

Both numerator and denominator should include PICU and DICU; but exclude any specialist commissioned beds managed at any level i.e. at system provider collaborative, regional or national level. Such as all secure (Forensic) beds, LD&A, mother and baby, eating disorders, or rehabilitation, this is not an exhaustive list of such exclusions.

* >3% 0 points
* >2-3% 1 point
* >1-2% 2 points
* ≤1% 3 points

1. Achieved mental health discharges (percentage)

This is the percentage of discharges from MH inpatient beds achieved in the previous 24 hours between 00:00 and 23:59.

**Numerator:** Number of discharges from adult + older adult MH inpatient beds in the previous 24 hours between 00:00 and 23:59

**Denominator:** Number of acute adult + older adult MH beds that are open to admission at time of OPEL assessment,

Both numerator and denominator should include PICU and DICU; but exclude any specialist commissioned beds managed at any level i.e. at system provider collaborative, regional or national level. Such as all secure (Forensic) beds, LD&A, mother and baby, eating disorders, or rehabilitation, this is not an exhaustive list of such exclusions.

* >3% 0 points
* >2-3% 1 point
* >1-2% 2 points
* ≤1% 3 points

1. Mental Health beds closed to admission – adult and older adult (percentage)

This is the percentage of acute adult + older adult beds that are temporarily closed to admission, regardless of the reason for and whether the closure has been agreed. Reasons include but are not limited to estates, infection prevention and control (IPC) or a planned closure.

**Numerator:** Number of adult + older adult occupied and unoccupied MH inpatients beds temporarily closed to admission at time of OPEL assessment.

**Denominator:** Number of acute adult + older adult mental health beds regardless of whether they are open or closed to admission at time of OPEL assessment.

Both numerator and denominator should include PICU and DICU; but exclude any specialist commissioned beds managed at any level i.e. at system provider collaborative, regional or national level. Such as all secure (Forensic) beds, LD&A, mother and baby, eating disorders, or rehabilitation, this is not an exhaustive list of such exclusions.

* ≤0.5% 0 points
* >0.5-1.5% 1 point
* >1.5-3% 2 points
* >3% 3 points

1. Patients waiting for mental health inpatient admission (percentage)

This parameter measures how many adults and older adults are in need of MH admission, regardless of their current location or residence, as a percentage of the number of open beds at time of OPEL assessment.

**Numerator:** Number of outstanding adult + older adult admissions at time of OPEL assessment, regardless of their location. Including those waiting for an MH bed in any community settings, in the acute emergency department (ED) and in any other acute beds, and those waiting for admission to PICU or DICU. Exclude pending admissions to any other specialty areas, those placed temporarily within the independent sector but waiting for admission to NHS service, and those already in an inpatient bed waiting for ‘step down’ or ‘in-scope’ beds (from a higher to a lower acuity inpatient setting).

**Denominator:** Number of adult MH + older adult MH beds + PICU and DICU beds that are open to admission at time of OPEL assessment. Exclude any specialist commissioned beds managed at any level i.e. at system provider collaborative, regional or national level. Such as all secure (Forensic) beds, LD&A, mother and baby, eating disorders, or rehabilitation, this is not an exhaustive list of such exclusions.

* ≤1% 0 points
* >1-5% 1 point
* >5-10% 2 points
* >10% 3 points