Organisation of Mental Health Services (Care Clustering)

All Specialist Mental Health Services Providers in England (that is, organisations such as Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust (OH)) were required by the Department of Health to assign people with mental health problems under their care to a “Care Cluster.” At assessment, people will be assigned to one of 20 clusters according to their problem and level of need. Clusters cover three broad areas: psychotic, non-psychotic and organic mental illnesses. There are some exceptions to this rule, most notably: children; people in forensic mental health services; people accessing talking therapies (IAPT); people accessing specialist eating disorder services.

Oxford Health has clustered everyone under their care in Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire who meet the criteria for clustering. All new referrals to the Trust will be assessed and, if appropriate, assigned to a Care Cluster. Everyone within a care cluster will be assessed and either discharged or reassigned to a Cluster within an agreed timescale. The time between assessments will vary depending on which cluster a person is assigned to, but this will be made clear to service users and their carers at each assessment.

What is Recovery?
Recovery is a term used in mental illness to talk about the way that people get better after they have been ill. Everyone’s journey is individual. For some people recovery will mean being able to cope fully with all of life’s challenges – the ups and the downs; the past and the future. For others, recovery means living a successful life with your illness.

What are Care Pathways?
Care pathways describe the services and support a person in a particular care cluster may receive in a comprehensive and consistent way. The aim is to try to explain what services will be available to people with a range of problems and how they, together with their families & health professionals, can choose the best types of care, support and interventions to achieve clearly defined outcomes or meet specific health or social care needs.

The pathways are designed for use by users of services and their families in partnership with health care professionals from many different disciplines and organisations. They act as prompts to show interventions that should be considered at each stage of a person’s journey.

What services can people expect to be able to access?
Not all services will be provided by Oxford Health. Some services provided by Primary Care or other local organisations will be available as part of an agreed care package; other services and activities may be accessed using direct payments. Available services will be tailored to meet identified needs and achieve agreed outcomes.