

# Curated Readings to Support Learning

Publicly accessible reports, research and guidance for delegates entering **Approved Mental Health Professional** training



This list highlights key **anti-discriminatory and anti-racist practice** readings in mental health services and use of the Mental Health Act (MHA) in the UK. It is grouped by theme, with tags indicating relevant **AMHP competency domains**. Use the filter buttons to focus on specific domains.

Show all

Values & ethics

Equality & ADP

Anti-racist practice

Human rights

Legal framework

Evidence-based practice

Working in partnership

Recording & accountability

## Legal Framework & Statutory Guidance

**Mental Health Act 1983 (as amended)** – primary legislation governing mental health detention and treatment in England & Wales.

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1983/20>

legal framework

human rights

recording

### ▼ Portfolio prompts

- How does the Act define AMHP powers and duties, and their limits?
- What evidence is needed to justify using these powers (necessity, proportionality)?
- How would you document your decision-making to ensure it's legally and ethically sound?

**Code of Practice: Mental Health Act 1983 (2015)** – statutory guidance on applying the MHA, including key principles (e.g. least restriction, respect, participation).  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/code-of-practice-mental-health-act-1983>

values & ethics

equality

legal framework

#### ▼ Portfolio prompts

- Which Code guiding principles might apply in a recent or hypothetical MHA assessment?
- How did you (or would you) ensure the chosen intervention was the least restrictive and respectful of the person's dignity?

**Equality Act 2010 – Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)** – law requiring public services to eliminate discrimination and advance equality.  
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance>

equality

values & ethics

#### ▼ Portfolio prompts

- What *reasonable adjustments* might be necessary to ensure a fair MHA assessment for people with disabilities, language needs, or cultural preferences?
- How can you demonstrate having “due regard” to equality in your decision-making process?

**Human Rights Act 1998** – ensures public authorities respect fundamental rights (e.g. liberty, family life) when making decisions.  
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/42>

human rights

legal framework

#### ▼ Portfolio prompts

- How do you weigh a person's right to freedom with concerns about their safety or others' safety during an MHA assessment?
- How can you show that any decision to restrict someone's rights (e.g. detain under the MHA) is proportionate and necessary?

**Mental Health (AMHP) Regulations 2008 – Schedule 2** – sets out competencies required for AMHP approval, including the duty to challenge discrimination and uphold rights.  
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2008/1206/schedule/2/made>

values & ethics

equality

recording

### ▼ Portfolio prompts

- How do these competency requirements influence your focus during training (e.g. understanding cultural factors, legal rules, professional accountability)?
- Can you think of a scenario where you might need to challenge discriminatory practice as an AMHP?

## Inequalities & Disproportionality in MHA Use

**NHS Digital – Mental Health Act Statistics (Annual)** – official data on how often the MHA is used, showing disparities in detentions and Community Treatment Orders across different groups and areas.

<https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/mental-health-act-statistics-annual-figures>

evidence-based practice

equality

### ▼ Portfolio prompts

- How do national MHA statistics inform your understanding of which groups are more likely to be detained or treated compulsorily?
- Why is it important to be aware of these disparities when making decisions as an AMHP?

**Ethnicity Facts & Figures – Detentions under the MHA** – government analysis of MHA use by ethnicity, showing Black communities are significantly more likely to be sectioned than White communities.

<https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/health/mental-health/detentions-under-the-mental-health-act/latest>

evidence-based practice

anti-racist practice

### ► Portfolio prompts

**Care Quality Commission – Monitoring the MHA (latest report)** – regulator's annual report on the MHA, highlighting issues like patient involvement, human rights, and persistent inequalities in care.

<https://www.cqc.org.uk/publications/monitoring-mental-health-act>

legal framework

recording

### ▼ Portfolio prompts

- What do regulators flag as common issues in MHA practice (e.g. lack of patient involvement, cultural needs not met)?

- How can you, as a practitioner, help address some of the issues identified in these reports?

**Delivering Race Equality in Mental Health Care (2005–2010)** – landmark 5-year programme (launched after the David Bennett Inquiry) to improve mental health services for Black and minority ethnic communities.

[https://www.inquestsandinquiries.com/projects/david-'rocky'-bennett-inquiry-\(2004\)](https://www.inquestsandinquiries.com/projects/david-'rocky'-bennett-inquiry-(2004))

equality

anti-racist practice

working in partnership

#### ▼ Portfolio prompts

- What changes in service delivery were targeted by this programme to make care more equitable?
- How has the legacy of this initiative (and cases like David Bennett's) influenced current AMHP practice or policies?

## Reviews, Reforms & Key Legislation

**Modernising the Mental Health Act (Independent Review, 2018)** – the “Wessely Review” of the MHA, recommending reforms to strengthen patient rights and reduce inequalities.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/modernising-the-mental-health-act-final-report-from-the-independent-review>

legal framework

human rights

equality

#### ▼ Portfolio prompts

- Which proposed changes in this review address problems of discrimination or excessive use of the MHA?
- How might these reforms (when implemented) change the way you practice or make decisions as an AMHP?

**NHS England – Patient & Carer Race Equality Framework (PCREF, 2023)** – first national anti-racism framework for mental health services. Mandatory for all providers in England, requiring co-produced action plans to reduce racial inequalities and embed anti-racist practice. Now part of CQC inspections (focused on improving leadership, data and patient feedback).

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/mental-health/advancing-mental-health-equalities/pcref/>

anti-racist practice

equality

working in partnership

recording

#### ▼ Portfolio prompts

- What does it mean for a mental health provider to become an “actively anti-racist organisation”, and how might this influence your role as an AMHP?

- How can co-producing service improvements with racialised communities (a core part of PCREF) improve experiences and outcomes for people subject to the MHA?

**Mental Health Units (Use of Force) Act 2018 (“Seni’s Law”)** – establishes requirements for transparency and accountability in how mental health services use physical force (informed by the death of Olaseni Lewis).

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/27>

human rights

values & ethics

### ▼ Portfolio prompts

- What safeguards does this law put in place regarding restraint, and why do they matter for patient rights and equality?
- How will you ensure that if restraint or force is ever used, it complies with the law and minimises harm?

## Research & Lived-Experience Evidence

**Bhui et al. (2025) – Racialised experience of detention under the MHA** – qualitative study (BMJ Mental Health) where people from diverse backgrounds described how it feels to be sectioned, exposing systemic issues and trauma.

<https://mentalhealth.bmj.com/content/28/1/e301655>

anti-racist practice

evidence-based practice

values & ethics

### ▼ Portfolio prompts

- What common themes did detained individuals highlight in this study (e.g. feeling unheard, experiencing bias or trauma)?
- How can you incorporate insights from service users’ experiences to improve your practice as an AMHP?

**Race Equality Foundation – Racial disparities in mental health** – evidence review (2022) on why and how mental health outcomes differ between ethnic groups, and which interventions can reduce inequalities.

<https://raceequalityfoundation.org.uk/publications/mental-health/>

evidence-based practice

equality

anti-racist practice

### ▼ Portfolio prompts

- How do factors like poverty, racism, or cultural misunderstanding contribute to different mental health outcomes in this review?

- What approaches or changes does the evidence suggest could help make mental health care more equitable?

**Mind – Legal rights & the Mental Health Act (information pages)** – explains patient rights under the MHA and how to challenge decisions, from a leading mental health charity's perspective.

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/legal-rights/>

human rights

working in partnership

#### ▼ Portfolio prompts

- Why is it important for people to know their rights when they are detained or treated under the MHA?
- How can understanding the service user perspective (like the information Mind provides to patients) make you a better AMHP?

## Practice Guidance for AMHPs & Social Workers

**Social Work England – AMHP training standards (2024)** – official standards for AMHP courses, emphasising human rights, equality and anti-oppressive practice as core learning outcomes.

<https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/standards/amhp-education-and-training-standards-guidance/>

values & ethics

legal framework

recording

#### ▼ Portfolio prompts

- How do these training standards reinforce the importance of anti-discriminatory practice and legal literacy for trainee AMHPs?
- Identify any areas of the standards you feel confident in, and any you want to develop further before or during the course.

**Skills for Care – Mental health social work & AMHP guidance** – resources for mental health social workers (including AMHPs) on best practice, leadership, supervision, and working collaboratively.

<https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Regulated-professions/Social-work/Mental-health-social-work-leadership/Guidance-to-support-mental-health-social-workers-and-AMHPs.aspx>

working in partnership

values & ethics

#### ▼ Portfolio prompts

- What support or guidance does this resource highlight to help you practice in a more anti-oppressive and collaborative way?

- How might you use supervision or peer support to reflect on discrimination or bias in cases you handle?

**BASW – Code of Ethics & Anti-Racism Guidance** – outlines the ethical duties of social workers (commitment to human rights, social justice) and provides guidance on being actively anti-racist in practice.

<https://basw.co.uk/about-basw/code-ethics>

values & ethics

anti-racist practice

### ▼ Portfolio prompts

- How do your personal and professional values align with the principles in the BASW Code of Ethics?
- What does it mean to be an actively anti-racist practitioner, rather than simply “not racist”, in your day-to-day work?