

# Easy read information on public mental health services in New South Wales

## Title

Instructions for using the *Introduction to Inpatient Mental Health Services* templates

## Authors

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## Description of resource

This document provides instructions on how to use the *Introduction to Inpatient Mental Health Services* templates. These templates allow mental health services to develop easy read information sheets to provide information to individuals utilising their services.

See the accompanying document [Making mental health information accessible for people with intellectual disability – A Toolkit](#) for information on how to support people to use these easy read information sheets.

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## Introduction

Easy read is used by people who need support reading and understanding standard written information. This can include people with intellectual disability and other cognitive or communication disorders.

The template is for developing easy read inpatient mental health service information. It allows you to develop an easy read resource that is responsive to the needs of your service.

The content in the template was guided by consultation with people with intellectual disability and their families and support persons. The template design has also been co-designed with people with intellectual disability.

## How to use the template

Use the template to create easy read resources for your inpatient service.

The template has been developed in sections. It is preferable that the sections are **provided as separate information sheets at appropriate times to minimise cognitive load and aid comprehension**. However, the sections could be provided to some patients all at once as a booklet with sections highlighting specific topics.

Information that is common to many services is included in the template. This information can be modified and built upon to meet the needs of your service (for example, adding in terms used in your particular service for wording in angled brackets e.g. <health care team>).

Images used in the template are from [www.photosymbols.com](http://www.photosymbols.com).

**Please note these are templates and are not ready to be provided to patients as is.**

## General guidelines for creating easy read documents

Some general guidelines for writing easy read documents are below. More information can be found at [Scope](#). The [Council for Intellectual Disability \(CID\)](#) offer easy read training and support in the development and testing of easy read resources.

### Design

- Place images to the left of writing.
- Left align text.
- Align main headings to the left of the page.
- Use a wide margin.
- Use a sans serif font such as Arial.
- Size 16 font for body text, 18 or larger for headings.
- Use page numbers (same size font as body text).

- 1.5 or double spacing between lines.
- Start each sentence on a new line.
- Include sufficient white space.
- Try to keep all text about one concept on the same page.
- Start a new page for a new topic.
- Include 3-5 images per page.
- Keep the design and layout the same on each page.

### Language

- Include only one idea per sentence.
- Use short sentences (maximum approximately 20 words).
- Use bullet points to list multiple concepts rather than writing them in a sentence.
- Use clear, commonly understood language.
- Use active sentences rather than passive.
- Refer to the reader as 'you'.
- Use 'I' or 'we' for the person/organisation writing the document.
- Use nouns/proper nouns rather than pronouns (e.g. your 'doctor' or their name, rather than 'they').
- Keep terminology consistent throughout the document.
- Avoid acronyms (write out in full in the first instance if used, except if more commonly used e.g. NSW versus New South Wales).
- Avoid jargon or slang.
- Do not write in upper case (except capitalising words).
- Do not use contractions e.g. use cannot rather than can't.
- When writing numbers, use numerals e.g. 1 rather than one.
- Do not underline words or use italics.
- Bold important words or those that you define.
- Bold phone numbers and web addresses.
- Use minimal punctuation e.g. avoid brackets and colons.

### Testing

- It is important to design the resources with people who will be the target audience (co-design). Include people with intellectual disability, their families and support persons, and mental health professionals in testing what you have developed.

## Conditions of use

No specific permissions are required to make minor modifications to the resources. Minor modifications may include:

- Changing/adding information in brackets so it is applicable to your service.
- Adding information that is applicable to your service using easy read guidelines.
- Deleting certain information that is not applicable to your service.

For major modifications, please check with Dr Janelle Weise at [j.weise@unsw.edu.au](mailto:j.weise@unsw.edu.au). Major modifications may include:

- Deleting large sections of the resources.
- Significantly changing definitions.
- Significantly changing the language used in the resources.

It is the responsibility of each service to seek local approvals for modifications made to the resources. 3DN, UNSW Sydney takes no responsibility for content that has been modified.

The authorship page (16 point font version at the **end** of the resources) should be retained with the booklet/each information sheet if provided separately (with the corresponding section heading as the title). As this page is not in easy read, it must be placed at the end of the document so it does not act a barrier to reading the information sheet.

### *Branding*

- LHD and mental health service logos can be added to the resources.
- NSW Government logo and 3DN, UNSW Sydney logos must remain.