

## The difference between a voluntary and involuntary stay in hospital



This easy read information sheet is about what staying in hospital as a voluntary or involuntary patient means.



It can be confusing when you go to hospital for **mental health treatment**.



**Mental health** is about how you think and how you feel.



**Treatments** are things that can help you feel better.



You can stay in hospital for mental health treatment as a

- voluntary patient
- involuntary patient

### Being a voluntary patient



Sometimes you might choose to go to hospital for mental health treatment.

When you choose to go to hospital this is called being a **voluntary patient**.



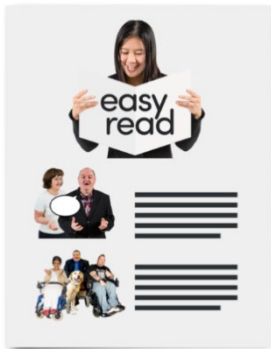
When you stay in hospital as a voluntary patient **mental health workers** need to talk to you about

- your rights
- your **responsibilities**

Your **responsibilities** are what you need to do.



**Mental health workers** are people who work to help you with your mental health.



There is an easy read version of **your rights as a voluntary patient**.

There is an easy read information sheet about **being a voluntary patient in a mental health hospital**.

Or go to

[www.3dn.unsw.edu.au/projects/easyread](http://www.3dn.unsw.edu.au/projects/easyread).

## Being an involuntary patient



Sometimes you do not have a choice about going to hospital for mental health treatment.



Being an **involuntary patient** is when you must stay in hospital for mental health treatment until you are well enough to go home.



Sometimes you may not be able to make choices that are safe because of your mental health.



Usually one of these people will take you to hospital because they are worried about your mental health

- a family member
- a support person
- a health worker
- police
- an ambulance



A doctor decides if you need to stay in hospital to keep you or other people safe.

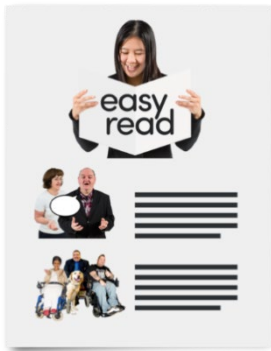
It is not your choice when you can leave.



You can go home when your doctor says you can.



When you stay in hospital as an involuntary patient there is a list of rights that the mental health workers must tell you about.



There is an easy read version of **your rights as an involuntary patient**.

There is also an easy read information sheet about **Being an involuntary patient in a mental health hospital**.

Or go to

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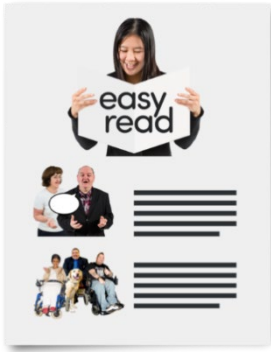


## The Mental Health Act

The rules about going to hospital for mental health treatment are called the **Mental Health Act**.

The Mental Health Act has rules about

- voluntary patients
- involuntary patients



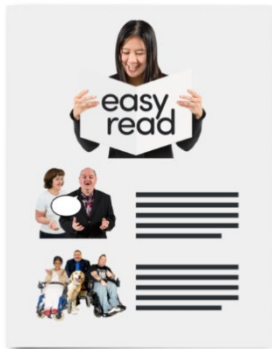
There is an easy read information sheet about the **Mental Health Act** or go to [www.3dn.unsw.edu.au/projects/easyread](http://www.3dn.unsw.edu.au/projects/easyread).



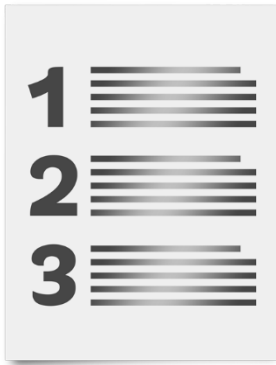
## Questions

You can ask hospital workers any questions you have about

- what will happen to you
- which mental health workers you will see



There are easy read information sheets about **Questions you can ask when you go to hospital for your mental health** or go to [www.3dn.unsw.edu.au/projects/easyread](http://www.3dn.unsw.edu.au/projects/easyread).



There is a list of what some **words** mean in this information sheet **here** or go to **[www.3dn.unsw.edu.au/projects/easyread](http://www.3dn.unsw.edu.au/projects/easyread)**.



## The NSW Mental Health Act- The difference between a voluntary and involuntary stay in hospital

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This information sheet is part of a series of easy read resources  
explaining

- how people can access public mental health services in  
New South Wales and
- what they can expect.

For information on how to support people to use easy read see  
[Making mental health information accessible for people  
with intellectual disability – A Toolkit](#)

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