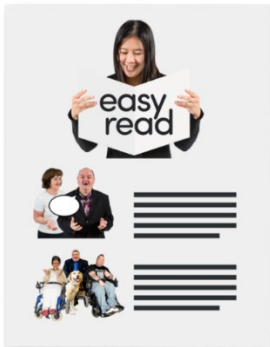


## Rights for voluntary patients introduction



This easy read information sheet is a summary of another document about your rights as a voluntary patient.

It is called **Schedule 3a Statement of Rights for Voluntary Patients.**



This summary does not replace the official document.

You should still be given the official document if you go to hospital.

You can also find it at

**[www.health.nsw.gov.au/mentalhealth/legislation/Documents/nh700099a.pdf](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/mentalhealth/legislation/Documents/nh700099a.pdf)**

or

search for **schedule 3a statement rights voluntary patients** in your web browser.



It is important that you get this information when you arrive at hospital for mental health treatment.

You must be

- given a written copy of the official document to keep
- told about the information in the official document



You can ask **mental health workers** for help to read this information sheet.

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



Someone you trust may also be able to help you.

This may be

- your family
- your friend
- your support person

## Rights for voluntary patients



This information sheet is about your rights when you stay at a mental health hospital as a **voluntary patient**.



You are a **voluntary patient** if you choose to go to hospital for **mental health treatment**.



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



**Treatment** is things that can help you feel better.

## Your rights about leaving hospital



You have the choice to leave hospital if you want.



You need to talk to mental health workers before you leave.



Mental health workers might say you need to wait and see a doctor before you leave.



Mental health workers can ask you to stay for up to 2 hours until a doctor comes.

The doctor will decide if you can go home.



You only stay in a mental health hospital as long as you need to **recover**.

**Recover** means getting better so you can do the things you want to do.

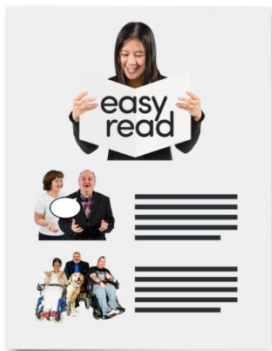


The **Mental Health Review Tribunal** will speak to you if you have been in hospital for more than 12 months.

The **Mental Health Review Tribunal** is a group of people who know a lot about mental health treatment and the law.



The Mental Health Review Tribunal will make sure you get the treatment you need.



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



Not all people who stay in hospital for mental health treatment can leave when they want to.

You might meet other people in hospital who are not allowed to leave.

## Rights about treatment



Mental health workers must explain your treatment to you.

You can ask questions if you do not understand.



You can ask someone you trust for help to understand your treatment.

You can ask

- your family
- your friends
- your support person
- a mental health worker



Mental health workers will ask you to **consent** to your treatment if you can.

**Consent** is when you give permission or agree something is OK.



You can ask mental health workers to stop treatment.



Mental health workers are not allowed to give you treatment without consent.

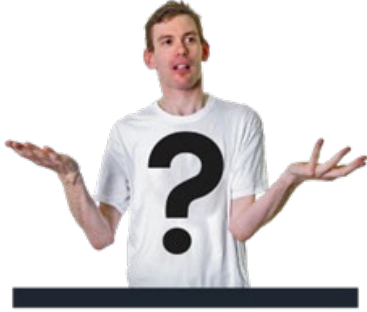
This may change if you become an **involuntary patient**.



An **involuntary patient** is someone who must stay in hospital for mental health treatment until they are well enough to go home.



## Rights about information



Sometimes mental health workers need to give you lots of information and ask lots of questions.



You can ask people you trust to help you give information to mental health workers.

People you trust can also help you ask for information you need.



You can choose 1 or 2 people to be your **designated carers** while you are in hospital.

A **designated carer** is a person who you have chosen to be told information about your mental health.



Designated carers are people who you know well.



You can also tell the mental health workers who your **principal care provider** is.

A **principal care provider** is the main person who helps or cares for you when you are at home.



Designated carers and principal care providers can get information about your mental health care for you.



Mental health workers will tell your designated carers and principal care provider

- when you are in hospital
- about any treatment plans
- if you move hospitals or go home
- information to help them support you when you leave hospital



You can ask to see your medical records.



You can tell any of the people you trust about your hospital stay and treatment.

This may be

- your family
- your friends
- your support person

## Rights if you have not been given the care you need



If the mental health workers say you need to leave hospital and you do not feel like you are ready it is OK to say no.

However, you do not have the right to stay in hospital if you have already been **discharged**.

**Discharged** means you have left the hospital.



It is important to tell someone if you have not been given the mental health care you need.



If you have worries about how hospital workers or other patients have treated you it is important to tell someone.



You can tell someone you trust.

This may be

- your family
- your friend
- your support person
- a hospital worker



You can talk to an **Official Visitor**.

**Official Visitors** are people who visit the hospital.

Official Visitors make sure people in hospital are treated well.

They do not work for the hospital

Someone you trust can also ask to talk to an Official Visitor.



To make an appointment with an Official Visitor call **1800 208 218**.

It is free to call this number.

You can also ask someone you trust to call for you.



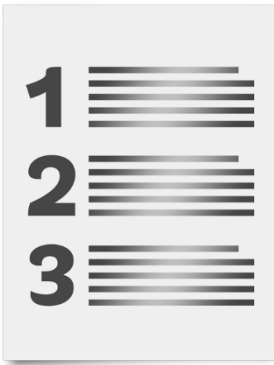
To ask to see an Official Visitor you can also put a note in the Official Visitor box at the hospital.



If you need help about the law you can call the Mental Health Advocacy Service.

Someone you trust can also call the Mental Health Advocacy Service.

The Mental Health Advocacy Service phone number is **9745 4277**.



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)**.

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

## Easy read summary to support Schedule 3a Statement of Rights for Voluntary Patients

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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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