

- You can ask to speak to the medical officer completing the assessment if they have not included you
- You can ask to speak to them separately
- You don't have to be present in the Emergency Department for them to consider your information
- They can talk with you by telephone or another audio-visual link



After Assessment in the ED

When the assessment is completed, the person will be either:

- Discharged from the Emergency Department with a referral to another service if necessary to obtain continuing care for their mental illness; or
- Admitted to a mental health ward as a voluntary patient (either in that hospital or another hospital); or
- Admitted to a mental health ward against their will as an 'assessable' patient (either in that hospital or another hospital)



Where You Can Find More Information

More information is available at:

- **Carers Gateway**
telephone 1800 422 737 or
<https://www.carergateway.gov.au/>
- **Mental Health Carers NSW**
<https://www.mentalhealthcarersnsw.org/>
- **NSW Health**
<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/mentalhealth/Pages/default.aspx>
- **Mental Health Coordinating Council**
<https://mhrm.mhcc.org.au/chapters/9-carers-of-people-with-mental-health-conditions/9a-carers-of-people-with-mental-health-conditions-overview/>
- **Way Ahead**
<https://directory.wayahead.org.au/carers-factsheet-mental-health-legislation/>

Scan the QR code
to access all brochures.



MHCN: May 2023



**Mental Health
Carers NSW**

Proudly funded by



Information for Carers of a person with Mental Health Issues

In the Emergency Department

This brochure provides information for carers on what happens in the emergency department.

Brochures are also available on how to get someone to hospital and what happens after they are admitted to a mental health facility.



Emergency Departments

In NSW, all medium and large public hospitals have mental health staff in the Emergency Department. Small hospitals may need to transfer a person to a larger hospital for a mental health assessment or arrange for a remote assessment by audio-visual link.

People can voluntarily go to the Emergency Department and request an assessment of their mental health. Some people are taken to the Emergency Department against their will because of suspected mental health issues.



Triage

The Triage Nurse is the first person you are likely to see at the Emergency Department. The Triage Nurse determines the urgency of each person's needs. If the person is presenting voluntarily, they may be asked to wait for some time.

If you think waiting will be difficult for the person or they will leave the emergency department without being seen, you should share your concerns with the Triage Nurse.



Who's Who in the Emergency Department

People brought to the Emergency Department against their will¹ are generally taken into the Emergency Department immediately.

The Emergency Department staff will make an initial assessment and call the mental health team. They may be given medication if their behaviour is of concern.

The mental health team will complete a full assessment.

In many hospitals the mental health team (authorised medical officers and specialist nurses), are not present in the emergency department all the time. So, there may be a delay before the mental health team commences the assessment.

Tell the staff in the Emergency Department if you are concerned by any delay in the assessment by the mental health team.

¹ For example, by police or ambulance under Sections 19, 20 and 22 of the Mental Health Act 2007 (NSW)



Detention in the Emergency Department

If a person is brought to the Emergency Department against their will they cannot leave until the full mental health assessment is completed. The assessment by the mental health team must be completed within 12 hours of their arrival in the emergency department.

If a carer or family member has made a written request to the 'authorised medical practitioner' at the hospital² the person will be required to remain in the Emergency Department until they have been assessed.

Use the QR code in this brochure to access the "How to get someone an assessment of their mental health" brochure.

The medical officer or accredited person completing this assessment:

- Will review any records about the person
- Complete a mental health examination
- Should talk to you, and others (unless it is not practical to do so)³
- Determines if the person needs to be admitted to hospital due to the risk of harm because they have a mental illness



² Section 26 of the Mental Health Act 2007 (NSW)

³ Section 72B of the Mental Health Act 2007 NSW