

## Discharge Planning and Transfer of Care for Consumers of NSW Mental Health Services (PD2019\_045)

The Mental Health Branch are reviewing the Policy Directive for Discharge Planning and Transfer of Care for Consumers of NSW Mental Health Services (PD2019\_045), in accordance with NSW Health statutory obligation to review the policy every five years. Once the project is complete, the new policy will replace the 2019 policy.

### Purpose

Reviewing the discharge planning and transfer of care policy is crucial for maintaining high standards of patient care, enhancing efficiency in mental health services, and ensuring regulatory compliance.

### Context

Transitions between services and care providers are times of significant risk for mental health consumers and their families/carers. Collaborative and comprehensive discharge planning and transfer of care improve safety for the consumer, their family/carer and the wider community.

Revision of the policy is required to ensure it continues to align with the current policy and service landscape for the mental health service sector in NSW.

The review will need to consider significant developments in the mental health sector since its last update, particularly:

- Intersections with the evolving National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) landscape and the primary health sector.
- Complexities of the community-managed organisation sector.
- Interactions with services supporting individuals with complex co-occurring conditions.

### Key Issues

The review will also address feedback received regarding the existing policy.

Stakeholders have shared concerns about:

- Effective transfers to primary care, Community Managed Organisations (CMOs) and NDIS service providers.
- Transition of care between youth and adult services.
- Involvement of families and carers in the transfer of care process.
- Consumers with complex mental health problems and comorbidities that require a collaborative care approach across agencies
- Relationships and lines of communication between Local Health Districts and Primary Health Networks.
- Integrating recommendations of serious incident reviews.
- Inconsistent communication and documentation during the transfer of care process, particularly around risk assessment and referral documentation.

### Consultation

Broad consultation is planned throughout 2025 and early 2026. The MHB will seek feedback from mental health branch teams, wider Ministry staff, LHD and SHNs, broader state and commonwealth governments, peak groups, the community sector, primary health sector, consumers, carers and families.

If you have any questions about the review, please contact Nathaniel Casella at [Nathaniel.Casella@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Nathaniel.Casella@health.nsw.gov.au) or Anita Smith at [Anita.Smith@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Anita.Smith@health.nsw.gov.au)