



Informal Patient

SELF-HELP TOOLKIT



Introduction

This information booklet and self-help toolkit will help you to understand your rights as an informal patient during your stay in hospital.

Read the full booklet or just the parts you may need.

QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE:

What is a
CPA?

Do I agree to
treatment?

Can I leave the
hospital?

What are my
rights?



In this booklet you will find:



ABOUT YOUR STAY

- 4 What is an informal patient?
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What does informal patient mean?

As an informal patient you are agreeing to treatment in hospital for your mental health.

Being an informal patient means you cannot appeal against this, as you are voluntarily staying in hospital.

Staying in hospital as an informal patient is different to being on a Mental Health section – if you are sectioned you would have to stay in hospital and have treatment whether you agree or not.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO ME?

- You will get treatment in a hospital for your mental health.
- You have certain rights under the Mental Health Act.



Your rights

GET INFORMATION

When you arrive on the ward you should be given information you can read and understand.

AGREEING TO TREATMENT

You have the right to refuse treatment.

THE RIGHT TO LEAVE

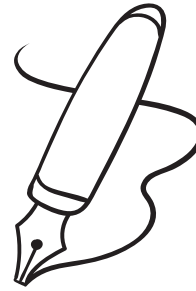
You have the right to leave, but you are still expected to follow your treatment plan. If the hospital feel you are too unwell you might get sectioned under the Mental Health Act.

LETTERS AND VISITORS

You have the right to see your letters and have visits from family or friends.

ACCESS TO A PHONE OR INTERNET

You can use your mobile or the hospital computer.



**Use this space
for your own
notes/questions**

Your rights

COMPLAINTS

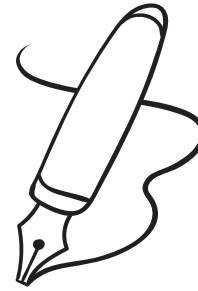
If you want to complain and don't know how, ask your care staff what you need to do to make a complaint.

SEE THE MENTAL HEALTH ACT CODE OF PRACTICE

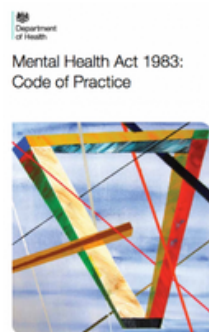
The Mental Health Act Code of Practice should be followed by all professionals who are involved in your care and treatment. A copy of the code should be available on the ward for you to see.

VOTE

You have the right to vote in general and local elections if you wish.



**Use this space
for your own
notes/questions**



Agreeing to treatment



You need to agree before receiving treatment.

SAYING YES TO TREATMENT:



- You should be told about your treatment.
- You should be told what your treatment is, the reasons for it and agree you are happy with it.
- You should be told what can happen if you aren't given the treatment.
- You can change your mind about consenting to treatment at any time.

SAYING NO TO TREATMENT:



- You can refuse treatment at any time, this includes medication.
- **Your Doctor may let you know that if you become very unwell you might be sectioned under the Mental Health Act; this would mean that treatment and medication can be given to you without your agreement.**

REMEMBER YOUR RIGHTS

You have the right to refuse treatment

Can I leave hospital?

REMEMBER YOUR RIGHTS

You have the right to leave but may still need to follow your treatment plan.



You can leave hospital at any time. You should talk to the staff on the ward before you leave so they know what your plans are.

GOING OUT:

- **You might have to wait if it is a locked ward, for someone to let you out.**
- **It would be better to talk to the hospital staff about any trips you plan to take.**
- **If you have a mobile phone, it might be a good idea to let the hospital have the number or agree to check in with them at certain times.**

You can be discharged at any time by your Doctor.

If you decide that you want to be discharged, then it might be a good idea to talk to your care team about your decision beforehand, this will make sure the correct support is in place.

Can I leave hospital?

There could be times where the Doctor may have to complete an assessment to section you. This could be if:

- You attempt to leave the ward and your care team are worried about the risks to your health.

The assessment would take place on the ward to decide if:

- You need to be assessed and treated for your mental health in hospital
- Your health would be at risk of getting worse if you don't get treatment
- Your safety or someone else's safety would be at risk if you don't get treatment.



Sometimes a Doctor will use section 5(2) – emergency section that can be used for up to 72 hours.

Sometimes a Nurse will use a section 5(4) – emergency section that can be used for up to 6 hours.

Ward rounds or patient meetings

All hospitals will have some kind of meeting, usually weekly, where you can talk about your treatment and stay in hospital.

You may wish to raise:

- Medication, its side effects, how you feel about it and changing it
- Having visitors
- Your money
- A complaint
- Asking to look at your records
- Being discharged.

PEOPLE WHO USUALLY ATTEND WARD ROUNDS:

- **Your Doctor**
- **Other medical staff – your Nurse / Occupational Therapist/ Pharmacist – Chemist / Junior Doctors**
- **Your family/friends (if you want them involved).**

Each hospital's meetings are different, so it might be a good idea to ask when your next meeting with your Doctor is.

If you want to speak at your meeting, you may be able to ask some of the professionals to leave if they aren't important to the issue you want to talk about.



Care Programme Approach (CPA)



A Care Programme Approach (CPA) is a meeting which will take place to discuss your care, treatment, and discharge plans.

The CPA will:

- Assess your needs
- Make a plan with you
- Put a plan into action
- Review the plan.

YOUR MEETING

People who usually attend your CPA meeting:

- Your Doctor
- Your Nurse
- Your Care Coordinator
- Your family/friends (if you want them involved).

Remember, if you want to speak at your meeting, you may be able to ask some of the professionals to leave, if they aren't important to the issue you want to talk about.

To help you to prepare for your meetings, use the handy self-help tool: 'Preparing for my meetings' on page 14.



SELF-HELP TOOLS



Useful Information

ABOUT YOU

Name: _____

Home Address: _____

Voluntary Patient Start date: _____

Voluntary Patient Review date: _____

STAFF INVOLVED IN MY CARE AND TREATMENT

Responsible Clinician (Doctor): _____

Named Nurse: _____

Care Coordinator: _____



Preparing for my meetings

WHAT IS THE MEETING

Date: _____

Time: _____

Place: _____

Who I want there: _____

WHAT I WANT TO ASK OR SAY

NOTES



Notes

SPACE FOR NOTES, DRAWING OR LEAVING BLANK



Notes

SPACE FOR NOTES, DRAWING OR LEAVING BLANK



THIS INFORMATION BOOKLET AND SELF HELP TOOLKIT HAS BEEN MADE BY:



advocacy focus

We hope that this information booklet has been useful. If you have any ideas how to make this booklet any better, please email us at:



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If you have any comments, compliments or complaints about Advocacy Focus or our Advocates, please get in touch.



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