

Chapter 5: Hospital care

Chapter summary:

In this chapter we review:

- n Hospital care in Haringey
- n Treatment under the Mental Health Act including different sections
- n The role of the Mental Health Act Commission
- n Outpatient treatment
- n Advice and information

Inpatients

Most inpatient mental health care in Haringey is provided by Barnet, Enfield and Haringey Mental Health NHS Trust at St Ann's Hospital in Tottenham.

On admission to hospital, you will be allocated a key nurse to work with you throughout your stay. They will introduce you to the consultant psychiatrist and medical team who will be working together to co-ordinate your care.

Wards on the St Ann's site are single sex, which means you will only share facilities with others of the same sex. Whilst nurses and doctors may not be of the same sex as you, staff will endeavour to accommodate requests to work with mental health professionals of the same sex.

Treatment in hospital under the Mental Health Act 1983

Although the majority of people receiving hospital care do so voluntarily, some people who need psychiatric treatment are not willing to come into hospital and may be detained under the powers of the Mental Health Act to ensure that they receive essential care and treatment. People admitted into hospital under a section of the Mental Health Act will be required to stay in hospital for a period of time which will allow for assessment and treatment. They are not allowed to leave hospital without permission.

While you are detained on a section lasting more than 72 hours you can be given medical treatment for your mental disorder even if you do not consent. After three months, medical treatment can only be given to you if you consent, or if an independent doctor appointed by the Mental Health Act Commission (see below) agrees.

People detained in hospital still have rights that must be explained to them and to their 'nearest relative' on admission. The hospital will also have leaflets in a range of languages that set out your rights. Further information on your rights is set out in chapter 6.

The provisions of the Mental Health Act 1983, which are most frequently used to detain patients in hospital, are summarised below. If you are detained under any section not mentioned here, you are welcome to contact the Mental Health Act Office (020 8442 6595) for further information about what is involved.

Section 2 - Admission for assessment or for assessment followed by treatment

Duration of detention: up to 28 days, but may be less. The patient can be discharged by their responsible medical officer (RMO), the hospital managers, or a Mental Health Review Tribunal. The 'nearest relative' can also discharge the patient (with 72 hours' notice) but the RMO can overturn this request.

Section 3 - Admission for treatment

Duration of detention: initially up to a maximum of six months, but may be renewed. The first renewal lasts for up to six months, and any subsequent renewal for up to a year. The patient's responsible medical officer (RMO), the hospital managers and the Mental Health Review Tribunal can discharge the patient. The 'nearest relative' can also discharge (with 72 hours' notice) but the RMO can overturn this request. The 'nearest relative' then has the right to appeal to the Mental Health Review Tribunal within 28 days.

Section 4 - Admission for assessment in cases of emergency

Duration of detention 72 hours (maximum). If appropriate, the section may be converted, within the 72-hour period, to a Section 2, or may be followed by a Section 3.

Section 136 -

Mentally disordered persons found in public places

Duration of detention: 72 hours (maximum). This section allows a police officer to bring a person to hospital if the officer believes that the person is mentally unwell and needs assessment.

Section 5(2) -

Doctors' holding power

Duration of detention: 72 hours (maximum). This section provides for an informal patient to be kept in hospital for up to 72 hours if he or she attempts to leave, and if the responsible medical officer or his or her deputy feels that it may be necessary to detain the patient under Section 2 or Section 3.

If you are detained under any section lasting 72 hours or more, you are entitled to appeal against your detention. Details about how to appeal are given in the next chapter.

Section 135 -

Warrant to search for and remove patients

This Section allows a police officer authorised by a magistrate to enter a property to remove a person to hospital or another place of safety. It can be used where a patient is already supposed to be in hospital under Section but has gone absent without leave or refused to come to hospital when the section papers are complete. It can also be used in cases where there is reason to suspect that the person is mentally unwell, and they are living alone or without proper care, in which case the patient can be kept in hospital for up to 72 hours to allow a full assessment.

The Mental Health Act Commission

The Mental Health Act Commission was established in 1983 and consists of some 100 members (commissioners) including laypersons, lawyers, doctors, nurses, social workers, psychologists and other specialists.

The Mental Health Act Commission is responsible for keeping under review the implementation of the Mental Health Act 1983 as it relates to patients who are detained or are liable to be detained. A Mental Health Act commissioner regularly visits all wards within St Ann's to interview detained patients and to check that appropriate care is being provided.

It can help patients or relatives make complaints about matters relating to the care and treatment of detained patients but it has no power to consider appeals against detention (such powers are held by the Mental Health Review Tribunal - see next chapter).

Mental Health Act Commission

Maid Marian House
56 Hounds Gate
Nottingham NG1 6BG
Tel: 0115 943 7100
Fax: 0115 943 7101

Outpatients

Your family doctor may suggest that you see a mental health professional with specialist assessment skills. This might be through attendance at an outpatient clinic to see a doctor or in an emergency by referral to one of the Crisis and Home Assessment Teams. Crisis teams can help to examine the problems you are experiencing and can, if appropriate, offer intensive care and ongoing treatment at home.

You may need to be admitted to hospital and be seen by staff from the crisis team. Staff from the crisis team work closely with the ward clinical team to assess when you should be discharged from hospital and determine the type of home support that should be provided.

Assessment in a mental health emergency can be obtained at any time of the day or night at the Emergency Reception Centre at St Ann's Hospital. People who come to the Emergency Reception Centre with both medical and mental health needs may be taken to the Accident and Emergency Department at the North Middlesex Hospital which has more facilities for the treatment and assessment of physical problems.

The North Middlesex Accident and Emergency Department also has three senior mental health nurses who are available for mental health assessments and crisis liaison with the Emergency Reception Centre at St Ann's.

Other forms of outpatient treatment

Following discharge from hospital it is likely that you will be offered an appointment with either a psychiatrist in an outpatient clinic or follow up from a Community Mental Health Team. If care is co-ordinated through the Care Programme Approach you will have had a mental health worker, either a nurse or social worker, allocated to you prior to leaving hospital. You will meet your community worker at a discharge planning, or Care Programme Approach meeting on the ward. During this meeting, future meeting times will be scheduled to take place after you leave hospital.

Psychological treatment

Clinical psychologists are not medical doctors. They provide a range of treatments for individuals and groups that aim to help people with problems such as phobias or other neuroses. Some clinical psychologists specialise in counselling and psychotherapy. Depending on your needs, psychologists may be allocated to work with you on the wards.

Advice and information

Emergency Reception Centre

St Ann's Hospital

St Ann's Road

Tottenham N15

Tel: 020 8442 6706 or 020 8442 6000 (St Ann's Switchboard)

Highgate/Hornsey and Wood Green

Community Mental Health Teams

Canning Crescent Health Centre

Canning Crescent

Wood Green N22 8JT

Tel: 020 8829 1000

North and South Tottenham

Community Mental Health Teams

Tynemouth Road Mental Health Centre

Tynemouth Road

Tottenham N15 4RH

Tel: 020 8275 4089

Mental Health Act Office

St Ann's Hospital

St Ann's Road

Tottenham N15

Tel: 020 8442 6595

St Ann's Hospital Patients Council

St Ann's Hospital

St Ann's Road

Tottenham N15 3TH

Tel: 020 8442 6843

Service: An independent service user group working to put forward the views of people using mental health services.