

Mental Health Act

Words explained (part 1)

Absent without leave (AWOL)

Leaving the ward for any amount of time without permission from the hospital.

Advance statement of wishes and feelings

An advance statement says how you want to be treated. Doctors have to think about this, but they do not have to do what you say.

Assessment

Finding out what treatment and support you need.

Best interests

When doctors make a decision about treatment, they have to think about whether it is in the patient's best interests. This means thinking about what is important to the patient, whether this is the best treatment to help the patient, and to consider what other people think.

Capacity

Capacity, also called Mental Capacity means being able to understand and make a decision for yourself at the time the decision needs to be made. If you cannot do this you lack capacity.

Code of Practice

The Code explains the Mental Health Act and tells people and services how to use it properly to give safe care.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality means keeping your information private. Sometimes your information will need to be shared with other people (such as doctors or tribunals) but you should be asked to give your permission.

Consent

Consent means giving your permission. This could mean giving your permission to sharing information or having treatment.

Care programme approach (CPA)

CPA is a package of care that is used by secondary mental health services, to plan your mental health care. You will have a care plan and someone to coordinate your care if you are under CPA. All care plans must include a crisis plan.

Care treatment review (CTR)

A CTR is when people who are not directly involved in your care check how well your care is going and help decide how it could be made better. A Community CTR is for people who are at risk of going into hospital. This type of CTR looks at why you might need to go into hospital and whether extra support can be given in the community instead.

Community treatment order (CTO)

The doctor in charge of your care can put you on a community treatment order if specific requirements in the Mental Health Act are met. This means you are discharged from hospital but can be recalled. There will be conditions attached to the order, including to make sure that you allow a doctor to examine you for specific purposes.

Court of protection

A special court that set up under the Mental Capacity Act to deal with issues relating to people who lack capacity to make decisions for themselves. It protects the rights of people who do not have Mental Capacity.

Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS)

Safeguards in the Mental Capacity Act for people who lack capacity are deprived of their liberty. Services have to think about these safeguards if they give you any care or treatment that takes away your freedom.

Detention

Detention means being held in a hospital for assessment or treatment. This is sometimes called being sectioned.

Discharge from hospital

Being discharged means you can leave the hospital.

Escorted/unescorted leave

Escorted leave is where you are allowed to leave the ward with a member or members of the hospital staff.

Unescorted leave is when you are allowed to leave the ward by yourself.

Mental Capacity Act 2005

The law that protects people aged 16 or over who do not have capacity to make decisions for themselves.

Mental disorder

This is sometimes called a mental illness. It means the person thinks, behaves or sees things differently and this makes everyday things difficult for them.

Mental Health Act 1983

This is the law about treating people with a mental disorder in England and Wales.

Reasonable adjustments

Changes to help a person with a disability. The NHS is required to take reasonable steps to avoid putting a person with a disability at a substantial disadvantage compared with people who are not disabled.

Restraint

Restraint means being physically held by members of staff.

Seclusion

Seclusion is when someone goes into a special room that is a safe place where they can stay until they are calm.

Section 17 Leave

This is a section of the Mental Health Act (1983) which allows the Responsible Clinician (RC) to agree a short break (leave) from hospital. This is the only way only a detained patient can legally leave the hospital site.

Section 117 after care

'After-care' means the help you get when you leave hospital. You are entitled to section 117 after-care if you have been in hospital under sections 3, 37, 45A, 47, or 48 of the Mental Health Act 1983. Section 117 after-care is free.

Treatment

Treatment means how you will be helped to get better. Treatment could include the use of medication, talking therapies or getting involved in activities.

Ward round

A ward round is where health professionals meet with you and your relative (if you want them to attend) to see how treatment is going. They decide if they need to make any changes. The treatment team is made up of people such as a psychiatrist, nurse, psychologist or occupational therapist. An IMHA can also attend if the patient wants advocacy support.