

## WHAT HAPPENS IF YOUR PSYCHIATRIST CONSIDERS YOU NEED TO BE IN HOSPITAL?

We often don't realise that we have become very unwell and need to be in hospital. We are often aware that we are struggling and it is always a good idea to talk to your private psychiatrist about this, but when it comes to making the decision of whether we need to go to hospital, it needs to be **with** your psychiatrist.

There may be times that you believe that you need to be in hospital but your psychiatrist may not agree. If this is the case, then have someone like your closest friend or family member come with you to see him/her. Trust yourself enough to get the help you need and when you need it most.

If you are able to be hospitalised early on in your illness, you may not need to stay as long and your care may not need to be complicated.

### What happens next?

So the way to go is hospitalisation - you and your psychiatrist have decided that this is the best thing for you.

Not all private hospitals provide mental health services. For those that do, some have mental health units within the larger hospital, while for others, this is their sole purpose. Your psychiatrist will contact the nearest and most convenient private hospital that provides mental health services, to see if there is a bed available for you. The psychiatrist may have an agreement with this private hospital to have his/her patients admitted there. This is important to know, as not all private psychiatrists have this arrangement in place with every private psychiatric hospital in your state and this could limit your choice of where you can go.

### Is there anything I need to check on before I go in?

Always check with your health insurer to make sure you are covered for your stay in hospital. This will be determined by things such as whether you have psychiatric cover in the first place and whether your level of cover may incur 'out of pocket' expenses.

It will also be determined by whether your health insurer has a contract with the private hospital and in the event that it doesn't, it gives you an opportunity to choose one that does.

### Admission to hospital

The hospital admission process will involve things such as being assessed for risks, your current medications, privacy and confidentiality around what information can be shared with other health professionals, what will happen with information collected from and about you and who you would like to be involved in, or advised about your treatment and care. You will also be informed of financial costs to you, how to claim from your health fund for your hospital costs and Medicare for your psychiatrist's costs whilst in hospital.

You will usually be shown around the hospital, told of programs to attend whilst there and have your rights and responsibilities explained to you. You may also be given a lot of information and pamphlets but don't be overwhelmed with this. You can ask questions later or take the time to read through information when you have settled in.

It is also important that within a day or so of going into hospital, you have a physical health check by a medical practitioner just to make sure you don't have any medical or physical problems that need to be monitored.

### Settling in

No matter what reason we are admitted to any hospital, this can sometimes be a frightening experience. Just remember that there are trained health professionals on hand to attend to you. Remember too, that in engaging with the programs designed to help you, you are helping yourself. An important part of this time is to look to when you go home and how you will best care for yourself.

Self determination and self empowerment is extremely important, along with having the power to ask questions, seek assurances, give compliments and if necessary, make a complaint.

*Whilst every effort has been made for accuracy, the Network takes no responsibility for the contents of this Information Sheet.*

SECRETARIAT

Po Box 542,

MARDEN SA 5070

Tel: 08 8336 2378

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