

Easy Read English

Supplementary Consultation of the Mental Health Act 2009

Disclaimer

The Easy Read version of this document has been created to make the information more accessible and easier to understand. While we have taken care to ensure that the content accurately reflects the main points of the original document, it may simplify or omit some details for clarity. This document should not be relied upon for legal, technical, or formal purposes. For a comprehensive and precise understanding, please refer to the original document, which you can [read here](#). If you have any questions or need further clarification, please get in touch with OCP HealthOCP@sa.gov.au

This paper talks about new ideas to make our mental health laws better for South Australians. Our South Australian mental health laws are currently known as the ‘Mental Health Act 2009’.

This is an extra review which follows on from a review completed last year.

The new ideas are just that – ideas. We want to hear from the community about what they think of these ideas. We want to know what might work well and what might be a problem.

We really want to hear from people who have a ‘lived experience of mental health issues and recovery’. This means you have a mental illness now or in the past.

We also really want to hear from carers of persons with mental illness.

Workers’ views are also very important, and we want to hear from you.

What Are the New Ideas?

Put New Principles in the Mental Health Act

Principles help everyone understand what the law is meant to do and how it helps people. They help people use the law in a way that is fair and respectful.

Suggested principles:

- **Prevent Harm Principle:** Mental health services should help prevent people from hurting themselves or others.
- **Suicide Prevention Principle:** Services should prevent people from taking their own lives.
- **Help for Severe Conditions:** Services should focus on people with very serious mental health challenges.
- **Help for Drug and Alcohol Problems:** Services should help people who have both mental health and drug or alcohol problems.
- **Help for Neurodevelopmental Disorders:** Services should help people with conditions like autism and intellectual disabilities.
- **Compassionate Care:** Services should be kind and respectful to everyone.

New Ideas for Emergency Assessments, Care and Treatment

- **Quick Assessments:** Services should make sure people are checked quickly when they need help.
- **Telehealth Reviews:** Psychiatrist to use video calls to check people before moving them to another hospital.
- **Other Powers for Care:** Use different rules to help people with problems like dementia or when they have alcohol or other drugs in their body.
- **New ideas about safety.**
- **Talk to Families:** Doctors should talk to families when making legal decisions about mental health care.
- **Explain Decisions:** Doctors should write down why they made certain decisions, especially if someone might harm others.
- **Warn Others:** If doctors suspect someone might hurt others, they should warn people at risk to prevent harm to those.

Human Rights Committee

New Committee: Create a group to ensure everyone's rights are respected when receiving mental health care. The law would ensure this group exists and can provide feedback on mental health human rights in South Australia.

Future Work

- New Rules for Care: Make new rules to help people with problems like dementia or intoxication.
- Involuntary Treatment: Think about making people get treatment for drug and alcohol problems if it helps their mental health.
- Help for Neurodevelopmental Disorders: Make sure there are laws to help people with conditions like autism or intellectual disability when they need care.

Consultation on the Mental Health Act 2009 Review

The consultation is now open.

- Website: [YourSay](#)
- Details: Discussion paper and supporting information available.
- Online Sessions: Register on the [YourSay](#) site to join and learn more about the proposals.

Please Share

Distribute: Please share this consultation with representatives of your Local Liaison Group.

Deadline:

Closes: 7 February 2025

Contact:

Phone: (08) 7117 9869

Email: HealthOCP@sa.gov.au

Thank you for your invaluable contribution to this important review!

Feel free to use this summary to inform others about the consultation. If you have any questions or need further assistance, just let us know.

If any of the topics have caused distress, please speak to a person you know, a support person, or a professional.

Service options include:

Lifeline	13 11 14
Lived Experience Telephone Support	1800 013 755
Mental Health Triage – for mental health emergencies	13 14 65
Urgent Mental Health Care Centre	08 8448 9100 215 Grenfell Street Adelaide 5000
Kid's Helpline	1800 55 1800
Beyond Blue	1300 224 636
Rebuild (provides trauma-based counselling and peer support to adult and child victims of crime as they move through the criminal justice process)	1800 310 310
1800RESPECT (National domestic family and sexual violence counselling service)	1800 737 732

Consultation Questions

1. **Prevent Harm Principle**
 - Do you think mental health services should help prevent people from hurting themselves or others?
 - What should this principle include?
2. **Suicide Prevention Principle**
 - Should mental health services help prevent people from taking their own lives?
 - What should this principle include?
3. **Help for Severe Conditions**
 - Should services focus on people with very serious mental health problems?
 - What should this principle include?
4. **Help for Drug and Alcohol Problems**
 - Should services help people with both mental health and drug or alcohol problems?
 - Should care plans include help for drug and alcohol problems?
5. **Help for Neurodevelopmental Disorders**
 - Should services help people with conditions like autism and intellectual disabilities?
 - What should this principle include?
6. **Compassionate Care**
 - Should services be kind and respectful to everyone?
 - How can we make sure care is compassionate?
7. **Quick Assessments**
 - Should people be checked quickly when they need help?
 - Should we report on how long it takes to check people?
8. **Telehealth Reviews**
 - Should psychiatrists use video calls to check people before moving them to another hospital?
 - What do you think about this idea?
9. **Other Powers for Care**
 - Should we use different rules to help people with problems like dementia or intoxication?
 - What protections should be in place for these rules?
10. **Talk to Families**
 - Should doctors talk to families when making decisions about care?
 - When should doctors not talk to families?
11. **Explain Decisions**
 - Should doctors write down why they made certain decisions, especially if someone might harm others?
 - When should this be required?
12. **Warn Others**
 - Should doctors tell people if someone might hurt them?
 - When should doctors not warn others?
13. **Human Rights Committee**

- Should we create a group to make sure everyone's rights are respected in mental health care?
- What should this group do?

14. New Rules for Care

- Should we make new rules to help people with problems like dementia or intoxication?
- What protections should be in place for these rules?

15. Involuntary Treatment

- Should we make people get treatment for drug and alcohol problems if it helps their mental health?
- What treatments should be included?

16. Help for Neurodevelopmental Disorders

- Should there be rules to help people with conditions like autism when they need care?
- What protections should be in place for these rules?