Your Rights

Under the Involuntary Psychiatric Treatment Act

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Under the Involuntary Psychiatric Treatment Act there are a number of ways you can be admitted to a psychiatric hospital. The following is an explanation of the ways you can be admitted and your rights under the Involuntary Psychiatric Treatment Act.

**Voluntary admission**

You, or the person who can legally act for you, and a psychiatrist agree that you would benefit from being in the hospital.

- As a voluntary patient, if you wish to leave and the staff does not believe it is appropriate, you must be seen by a physician. The physician must be available to you within three hours, otherwise you can leave the hospital should you wish to do so.

**Medical examination**

You are brought to the hospital for a medical examination because of a court order, or are brought by police.

- A medical examination must take place within 24 hours. After that time, you must either be held for an involuntary psychiatric assessment or be told that you can leave the hospital should you wish to do so.
Involuntary psychiatric assessment
You are assessed involuntarily by a psychiatrist when one or more physicians believe that you need a psychiatric assessment because:

› You have a mental disorder which is likely to result in serious harm to yourself or to another person or your health may worsen without mental health care;
› You would benefit from being in hospital; and
› You do not meet the criteria for a voluntary psychiatric assessment.

• You can be held for an involuntary psychiatric assessment for 72 hours. If, at the end of 72 hours, a Declaration of Involuntary Admission* has not been completed, you can leave the hospital should you wish to do so.

*A Declaration of Involuntary Admission is a form that must be completed by a psychiatrist in order for you to be admitted to the hospital as an involuntary patient.
Involuntary admission
You may be admitted involuntarily to a psychiatric hospital when, based on a psychiatric assessment, a psychiatrist determines that because of a mental disorder you would benefit from being in hospital, and:

› You are unable to make decisions about your admission or treatment; and
› You are threatening or attempting to hurt yourself or others or you are likely to suffer serious physical harm; and/or
› Your mental disorder is expected to worsen if you are not in the hospital.

Hospital staff are required to notify a Patient Rights Advisor of your involuntary admission immediately. You, or the person who can legally act for you, are encouraged to meet with a Patient Rights Advisor. The Patient Rights Advisor will provide you with information and answer questions about your rights under the Act.

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When you are admitted to the hospital as an involuntary patient, you and the person who can legally make treatment decisions for you must be advised in writing and/or have the following explained to you by a staff member of the hospital:

- To be advised of the name and location of the psychiatric hospital in which you have been admitted;
- To be advised that you can be discharged if a Declaration of Involuntary Admission is not renewed initially within a month of admission, and subsequently within a month of the first renewal, within two months of the second renewal and within three months thereafter;
- To be advised of the right to retain and instruct legal counsel at any time while you are in the hospital;
- To have a hospital staff member explain any document or written communication that affects you; and
- To be advised of the Psychiatric Facilities Review Board process and that you have the right to apply for a review of your status. The Psychiatric Facilities Review Board is a panel of people that review
matters in respect of your status such as:

› When you have been held in hospital against your wish;
› When you have been found incapable of making decisions about your care;
› When someone other than you has been appointed to make decisions about your health care; or
› When your Community Treatment Order or Certificate of Leave has been cancelled.

For more information, please contact:
The Patient Rights Advisor Service
Tel: 902-404-3322
or 1-866-779-3322
Fax: 902-404-3434

Nova Scotia Health Authority promotes a smoke-free, vape-free, and scent-free environment.
Please do not use perfumed products. Thank you!

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The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.