Mental Health Act Review Submission

Submission Public Consultation on Draft Legislation to Update the Mental Health Act, 2001

09-04-2021 [redacted] – [redacted]

Introduction

I'm [redacted], I'm making a submission to this consultation on behalf of young people in Ireland.

All service-users of the mental health services, including inpatient care, should be able to receive the highest standard of care. They should always be listened to and their wants and needs should always be taken into consideration. What the patient wants is most important.

- **Change of status from voluntary to involuntary**

This should only happen in a very severe situation. People should be able to choose what care and treatment they receive as much as possible.

- **Capacity**

Voluntary and involuntary patients should be able to have Advance Health Directives in mental health treatment and to have them used. Advance healthcare directives should apply equally to people with a mental health difficulty as to others.

- **Consent to treatment**

16 and 17 year olds should be able to consent to mental health treatment, the same as they are able to consent to physical health treatment. Their wishes should be treated as the most important, in a decision about inpatient care.

- **Provisions related to children**

Prevention and treatment in the community should be the most important part of treatment for mental health issues in children. Inpatient care should be a last resort.

The autonomy and self determination of children should be respected, taken into consideration and listened to, always.

Mental health services for children should be located in close proximity to the children's homes, families and communities.

Children must always receive the least intrusive option of care, in the least restrictive environment and as close to what the child wants as possible. The child's parents or guardians should always be consulted, but parents and guardians should listen to their child and the parents and guardians don't have the most important opinion, either do psychiatrists or mental health workers, it's the children themselves. Any decision in regards to mental health care should be guided by what children feel they could go through with or benefit from.

Mental health services should be provided in an age appropriate environment. Children should be protected from abuse and gaslighting, always.

There should be a national advocacy service for people under 18 years old that are accessing the mental health services.

- **Information and individual care/recovery planning**

Individuals attending all mental health services, including inpatient services, should have a legal right to an individualised care and recovery plan, that is adhered to and a plan that gets reviewed so the patient can get the highest standard of care possible.

Every patient in an inpatient unit should be made aware of the reasons they are attending this service, the treatment that they can expect to receive and who they can contact for advocacy support. Every patient should have a key worker and support available to them.

They should be informed if anything changes. All patients should be kept informed and aware of what is going on at all times while they are in hospital.