

HOW to contact us

- You can call us at any time on **1800 999 057** – it is a free call from a landline
- You can ask mental health services staff to call MHAS and they must do this within 24 hours
- The MHAS office is open 8.30am to 4.30pm, Monday to Friday but you can leave a message on the answering machine and we will get back to you as soon as possible, even on weekends. We need to know your name, contact number, date of birth and where you are staying
- See our website: **www.mhas.wa.gov.au**

Who we are – The Mental Health Advocacy Service (MHAS)

- The MHAS is a free service which is independent of hospitals and all mental health services
- We advocate according to your wishes so you can be heard
- We have powers under the *Mental Health Act 2014* to help us advocate for you. If you don't object, we can look at your medical file and try to get answers to questions you have about your treatment and care
- Mental health services staff must answer our questions, provide us with information and help us try to resolve issues for you.

Helpful Contacts

Mental Health Advocacy Service

Reply Paid 84455 – no postage stamp required

Ph: (08) 6234 6300 or

Freecall: 1800 999 057

Website: www.mhas.wa.gov.au

Other Helpful Contacts

Health Consumers' Council

For advocacy, information and advice regarding health services

Ph: (08) 9221 3422 or Freecall: 1800 620 780

Mental Health Law Centre

For legal advice and representation at Mental Health Tribunal hearings

Ph: (08) 9328 8266 or Freecall: 1800 620 285
or Advice Line: (08) 9328 8012

Health and Disability Services Complaints Office (HaDSCO)

For investigations of complaints about public and private health services

Ph: (08) 6551 7600 or Freecall: 1800 813 583



MENTAL HEALTH
ADVOCACY SERVICE



MENTAL HEALTH
ADVOCACY SERVICE

Getting your voice heard – know your rights

Freecall 1800 999 057

WHAT we can do to help you

Mental Health Advocates are there to protect your rights, help you to express your own wishes, and say what you want to happen.

We are on your side and can help you:

- understand and enforce your rights
- arrange a meeting with your doctor or treating team and attend with you
- explain your wishes to your treating team
- get a further opinion from another psychiatrist
- apply to the Mental Health Tribunal to review your involuntary order or other decisions made about you
- support you in the Tribunal hearing
- refer you to lawyers
- get input into your treatment, support and discharge plan
- make a complaint about the mental health service
- get you an interpreter
- make contact with your family or other support persons.

We promote compliance with the *Charter of Mental Health Care Principles* to ensure you get the best treatment and care possible.

WHO we can help

Mental Health Advocates can help you if you are:

- an involuntary patient in hospital
- someone on a Community Treatment Order (CTO)
- someone who has been referred for examination by a psychiatrist (they must let you use a phone to call us if you are being detained)
- a voluntary patient in hospital who is not allowed to leave because you are being detained for assessment
- a mentally impaired accused person under the *Criminal Law (Mentally Impaired Accused) Act 1996* (e.g. on a Hospital or Custody Order) and are detained in an authorised hospital or living in the community
- a resident of a private psychiatric hostel.

If you are not sure if you are one of the above, call us anyway:

- we may be able to help you
- we can still tell you your rights or
- we can refer you to someone else who can help.

Family, carers and other personal support persons can call us on your behalf and we will work with them if you consent.

WHEN we will see you

A Mental Health Advocate will contact you within 7 days if you are over 18 years, and within 24 hours if you are under 18 years, if:

- you have just been made an involuntary patient
- you have just been put on a CTO
- you are a mentally impaired accused and have just been detained in an authorised hospital.

You also have the right to call us at any time, or ask mental health services staff to call us for you, and:

- an Advocate will either phone you back or visit you as soon as they are able to
- if you have been referred for examination, a Mental Health Advocate must contact you within 3 days but we will try to contact you within 24 hours
- if you are under 18 an Advocate will contact you within 24 hours.

You can also approach a Mental Health Advocate while they are visiting a hospital, mental health service or hostel.

We have Mental Health Advocates based in Perth, Albany, Bunbury, Kalgoorlie and Broome. If you are somewhere else we will contact you by phone.