

What you need to know about Psychotropic medicines

Easy Read



About this information

**AUSTRALIAN
COMMISSION
ON SAFETY AND
QUALITY IN
HEALTH CARE**

This information is from the **Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care**.

We will say **the Commission** for short.



The Commission makes sure everyone gets good health care.



We have made this information easy to read with pictures to show ideas.



You can ask for support to read this information.

Why we made this information



This information is about **psychotropic medicines.**



Psychotropic medicines can change how you

- Feel



- Think



- Act.



People can take psychotropic medicines for their **mental health** or to change how they act.

Mental health means the way you feel and think.



The Commission made this information so everyone knows how and when to use psychotropic medicines.

<u>1</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>2</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>3</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>4</u>	<u>8</u>

This information has 8 parts about the care you should get if you take psychotropic medicines.

Part 1 – Getting person centred care



You get **person centred care** from healthcare workers.



Person centred care means healthcare workers

- Know about you



- Ask you about what you want and need.



It also means healthcare workers

- Treat you with respect



Rights

- Respect your rights



- Support you to make decisions about your care.



You can also get support to make decisions from

- Family



- Support people



- **A nominated decision maker.**

A nominated decision maker is someone who can make decisions for you.

Part 2 – Giving informed consent



There are things healthcare workers must do before they give you a psychotropic medicine.



They must tell you or the people who support you

- How the medicine will help



- How long you need to take the medicine



- What other things might happen to your body if you take the medicine.



You or the people who support you can say **yes** or **no** to taking psychotropic medicines.



If you say yes after someone tells you about the medicine this means you give **informed consent**.

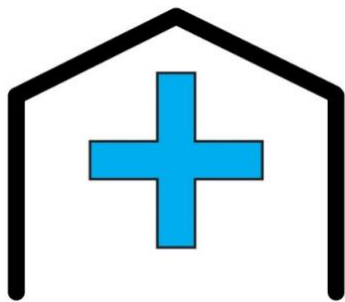


There are times when psychotropic medicines can be given to you without your informed consent.



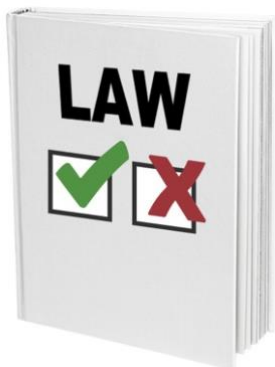
This might happen if

- You are going to hurt yourself or others



- There is an **emergency**.

An **emergency** is when you need help straight away.



In an emergency the person giving you the medicine must follow the **law**.

The **law** is rules everyone must follow.

Part 3 – Understanding reasons for how you act



Sometimes the way you feel or act might

- Not be safe



- Hurt you or other people.



When this happens you are **assessed**.

Assessed means a healthcare worker will try to find out why you feel or act this way.



You might be assessed to find out if you are doing things because you

- Are in a lot of pain



- Feel very sad



- Feel very sick



- Or if anything else is upsetting you.



When you are assessed a healthcare worker will

- Do some tests



- Ask what support you need for your care

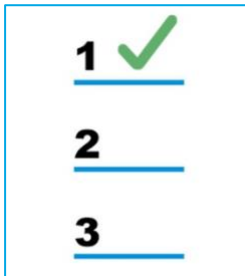


- Talk to other people who know you well.

Part 4 – Ways to get help without medicine



There are ways to change how you feel or act without using psychotropic medicines.



These ways should always be tried first.



Healthcare workers should think of different ways that work well for you.



These could be

- Changing the things around you like noise or light



- Going for a walk



- Listening to music



- Spending time with animals.



Everyone who cares for you should know the ways that work for you.

Part 5 – Behaviour support plans



You might get a **behaviour support plan** if the way you feel or act



- Is not safe



- Could hurt you or other people.



A **behaviour support plan** helps people know how they can support you.



A behaviour support plan should have

- Information about what you need and want



- Information about the way you feel or act



- Different ways to support you that work for you.



Everyone should follow your behaviour support plan and update it when things change.

Part 6 – Reasons for taking psychotropic medicines



There are reasons for taking psychotropic medicines.



Psychotropic medicines should only be taken when

- There is a big chance the way you feel or act could hurt you or others



- How you act makes you feel bad or stops you having a good life



- You have tried different ways to change how you feel or act but they do not help



- You have trouble with your mental health.



Healthcare workers must write down the reason you get a psychotropic medicine in your **healthcare record**.



A **healthcare record** is where information about your health care is kept.

Part 7 – Medicine checks



Healthcare workers must do checks if you take psychotropic medicines.



These medicine checks are important so everyone knows

- If the medicine is working well for you



- If you are taking the right amount of medicine



- If you are having any bad things happen to your body from the medicine



- If you should stop taking the medicine.



Healthcare workers must tell you what they find out when they finish the medicine check.



Healthcare workers must tell you when the next medicine check will be.

Part 8 – Sharing your health information



When you go to different care services your health information is shared.

This is so everyone knows what your needs are.



This means things like

- Your behaviour support plan if you have one



- Information about any psychotropic medicine that you take.



This also means information like

- Why you take the medicine



- How long you need to take the medicine



- When you last had the medicine



- How the medicine is checked.



This means that you get the same care and medicine wherever you are.

More information



If you want more information you can

Go to our website at

www.safetyandquality.gov.au



Email us at

mail@safetyandquality.gov.au



Call us on

02 9126 3600.