



Do you need an interpreter?

 If you do not speak English, the hospital can arrange an interpreter for your meetings with the doctor, legal visits and hearings. The MHAS can arrange an interpreter for office interviews. Please phone the MHAS at least one week before your office interview so we can arrange an interpreter for you.

 People who are hearing/speech impaired can communicate with us through 9219 5126 or by calling the National Relay Service on 133 677.



Mental Health Advocacy Service

Level 4, 74-76 Burwood Road

Burwood NSW 2134

Telephone: 9745 4277

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Mental Health Advocacy Service

Legal help and advice about mental health matters

The Mental Health Advocacy Service (MHAS)

The service is part of Legal Aid NSW and provides free legal advice and assistance about mental health law.

Telephone advice is available for all areas of mental health law. If you are not sure whether we can help, give us a call anyway. We may be able to refer you to the right place for your problem.

You can telephone for an appointment to come and speak to a solicitor at our Burwood office (phone number on back).

Relatives and friends are also welcome to call us for advice.

A social worker is also available to help with a wide range of related social issues.

How can the MHAS assist you?

If you have been detained in a hospital under the *Mental Health Act*, you may be discharged after examination or brought before the Magistrate. A solicitor can represent you in the hearing and also advise you about:

- your admission under the Act
- medication and treatment
- hearings before the magistrate
- financial management orders
- community treatment orders
- appeals

The Guardianship Tribunal

MHAS provides representation for people appearing before the Guardianship Tribunal. Call the MHAS well in advance of the hearing date so we can advise you or arrange representation.

How do you get in touch with the MHAS?

Solicitors from MHAS, or private solicitors (arranged by MHAS), attend each hospital in New South Wales that has involuntary patients. If you are seeing the magistrate, a solicitor will come to see you first. You do not have to make a request to see the solicitor.

A solicitor will also visit you if you are kept in hospital and will be seeing the Mental Health Review Tribunal about:

- extending your involuntary patient order
- having your financial affairs managed by the Protective Office.

A solicitor will represent you if:

- the hospital is asking for a community treatment order (CTO) for you, and
- you ask us to represent you.

There are other situations where a solicitor may represent you. For example, if you are appealing against a refusal by the Authorised Medical Officer to discharge you.

Please contact MHAS as soon as possible if you want representation for a CTO or an appeal.

You may telephone a solicitor at MHAS if you are not sure about what is happening to you. We will pay for the call if you are outside Sydney.