ACT Government Health

ACT Charter of Rights for People who experience Mental Health Issues

Fact Sheet: People who can help me.

Sometimes things go wrong and our rights are ignored. It's important to know who can help at these times.

In the first instance, it is a good idea to try and resolve concerns directly with a service provider. However, at times this doesn't work and some situations need an external third party.

Within the ACT Mental Health Community Sector.

Every ACT government funded mental health community provider is required to have a formal complaints mechanism for clients and carers. It is okay to ask about these, where they are and how you use them. If you don't feel able to do this on your own then get a support person to help you.

ACT Government Health Directorate takes consumer feedback and complaints seriously. You can talk to the feedback coordinator over the phone or make a time to meet them in person .They will help you with your concern. Tel: 6207 7627 Or Email healthfeedback@act.gov.au

The web site www.health.act.gov.au/consumer-information/feedback/consumer-feedback is a link for healthcare consumers and gives information about healthcare standards, giving feedback, and accessing your medical records. It also provides links to other feedback avenues such as the Health Services Commissioner.

ACT Government Health services directory www.health.act.gov.au/health-services lists health services, the service address, phone number, location on a map, and opening hours.

Each ACT Government Directorate has its own feedback mechanisms. You can provide feedback directly to the ACT Government by visiting Canberra Connect. www.contact.act.gov.au/

ACT Human Rights Commission: - resolves complaints about the provision of health services, services for older people, disability services and services for children and young people. The Commission also resolves complaints about unlawful discrimination, and promotes human rights in the ACT. www.hrc.act.gov.au Tel: 6205 2222 or Email: human.rights@act.gov.au

Public Advocate: The Public Advocate of the ACT is an independent Statutory Authority which provides best interests advocacy for children, young people and adults in the community who suffer from a condition or situation that makes them potentially vulnerable to abuse, exploitation or neglect. This includes people 'in care' such as in a mental health facility or supported community accommodation, children living out of home or people in custody. The ACT Public Advocate can also be appointed as Guardian, in line with the Guardianship and Management of Property Act 1991, for those people who have 'impaired capacity' and for whom there is no-one else suitable or available to act as their guardian and make substitute decisions on their behalf. They can be contacted on Tel: 6207 0707 or www.publicadvocate.act.gov.au

Mental Health Official Visitors

Under the Mental Health Act 1994, Official Visitors are appointed to independently inspect and oversee services and facilities that provide services under that legislation. They have the power to enter premises, inspect documents, and make formal reports to the Minister.
Email: official.visitors@act.gov.au or telephone: 62055045.

ACT Disability, Aged and Carer Advocacy Services (ADACAS): - is an independent community organisation that provides free advocacy and information to people with disabilities, including those with psychiatric disability, and vulnerable older people. They can be contacted on telephone: 6242 5065 or www.adacas.org.au

Advocacy for Inclusion: -Provides individual and systemic advocacy to improve life for people who have a disability. Telephone 6257 4005 www.advocacyforinclusion.org

CarersACT is the Peak Body for Mental Health Carers' in the ACT. They will provide advocacy services. They can be contacted on Tel: 6296 9900 or 1800 242 636 or email: carers@caresact.asn.au

Healthcare Consumers Association: Tel: 62307800 or www.hcca.org.au

Disability Discrimination Legal Service: Free legal service assisting people who have been discriminated against on the basis of their disability as recognised under legislation. Tel: 6247 2018 or www.welfarerightsact.org.au

Tenants Advice Service: Free over the phone legal advice on tenancy matters, information and community education for all ACT tenants. Works on tenancy /housing issues and represents ACT tenants in a range of forums. Tel: 6247 2011

ACT Mental Health Consumer Network Inc- Mental health consumers volunteer and train to advise, inform and partner with organisations and Government to improve outcomes for people using mental health services. They can be contacted on Tel: 6230 5796 or Email: actmhcn@actmhcn.org.au or www.actmhcn.org.au