

Welcome to the Adult Mental Health Unit (AMHU)



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Your Recovery

Our aim is to provide a comfortable and therapeutic environment to assist in your recovery.

We hope that your stay is comfortable. Please feel free to approach staff if you have any questions.

Our goal is for you to achieve wellness, rather than simply treating any illness.

Your Rights

People who experience mental illness or mental health problems have the same rights as everyone.

You have the right to:

Respect: for your age, culture, language, disability, gender and sexuality

Safety: be treated in the least restrictive environment, receive information about side effects

Communication: be heard, ask questions about your care, state your views and preferences

Access: timely access to services, care that promotes recovery, if and when your family is involved

Participation: participate in decisions about your care, access advocacy if required

Privacy: your privacy and personal information being protected, lawfully access your health record

Comment: comment on your care, receive information on how to make a complaint

The ACT Charter of Rights is for all people who experience mental illness or mental health problems.

The rights are the same; regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, culture, language, diagnosis, abilities or wealth. You can ask your nurse or doctor to explain these rights to you.

Your Responsibilities

All members of Australian society have responsibilities in relation to health care. Specifically, you have two responsibilities during your admission. We ask that you respect the human worth and dignity of others and participate as far as possible in reasonable treatment and rehabilitation processes.

Your belongings

Your bags will be searched by a nurse as part of the admission process. We do this to make sure the unit is safe and no prohibited items are brought to AMHU. Please limit your clothing to around 4-5 changes of comfortable clothes. There are facilities to wash and dry them during your stay. We may ask that excess items be sent home.

Single bedrooms

The single bedrooms have been designed for your privacy and comfort. Each room has a private bathroom with a waterfall shower and a toilet. Your belongings can be secured in your room by locking the door with a special bracelet that is kept with you at all times. Please see your nurse if you have any issues accessing or securing your room.

Telephone Calls

Local telephone calls can be made from the socialisation spine at no cost to consumers.

We ask that you limit calls from the socialisation spine phone. STD calls can be made in some circumstances. Please talk with your nurse if you need to make a long distance call.

You are welcome to bring your mobile phone to AMHU but access will be determined by treating teams and nursing staff. We ask that you store the charger behind the staff station for safety reasons. Your phone will be charged using AMHU chargers.

Please respect others' privacy by not using the camera or recording features. It is your responsibility to keep your mobile phone safe. Staff are unable to assist in finding lost phones and equipment.

Valuables

There is a small safe available for storing valuables at the staff station. We recommend that you do not bring expensive items or large sums of cash to AMHU. We do not accept responsibility for lost or damaged items.

We are committed to providing a safe environment at AMHU. Some small electrical appliances are permitted provided they are less than 12 months old. Older items cannot be brought to AMHU in case of electric malfunction. Staff may remove and store these items if they present a risk to you or other consumers.

Complementary medicines

Please hand any complementary medicines (e.g. fish oil, vitamins) to nursing staff for safekeeping.

Talk with your doctor if you would like to use complementary medicines during your stay. If the doctor approves they will list the complementary medicine on your clinical file and it will be administered by the nurses at the usual medication times.

Cigarettes

AMHU is a smoke-free facility from 1 January 2013. Please note cigarettes are not sold on The Canberra Hospital campus. We ask visitors to not bring cigarettes/tobacco items onto the unit. Lockers are provided in the foyer for cigarette item storage. Consumers can access their cigarettes while on leave, but they must be given to staff upon the consumer's return to the unit.

Nicotine Replacement Therapy

The doctor will assess your nicotine dependence as part of the admission process.

AMHU provides a full range of Nicotine Replacement Therapy, including patches and inhalers, for no cost. We encourage you to try these products to improve your health.

Please speak to your doctor if you have any concerns.

Support to help you quit

Quitline is a telephone support line staffed by professionals who are skilled in assisting people to quit smoking. You may call Quitline from the telephone in the socialisation spine. There are also Cancer Council leaflets about quitting available on request. We recommend taking advantage of the gymnasium, daily walks and the therapeutic program to provide distraction from withdrawal symptoms. Speak with your nurse for more information.

NRT support after discharge

Nicotine patches are listed on the PBS. A prescription for nicotine patches will be provided with your discharge medications if you have been using them during your stay at AMHU. If you have a concession card, you can use this prescription to purchase a three month supply for the cost of a concession prescription. It is recommended that you continue to use Nicotine Replacement Therapy for several months after quitting for the best chance of success.

Daily Routine

Meals

We are happy to accommodate different dietary requirements. Please ask your nurse for more information.

Breakfast – 8.00am

Lunch – 12:00pm

Dinner – 5.00pm

Supper – 7.30pm

Special meals are prepared to celebrate holidays such as Christmas and Easter. BBQs and community lunches are held regularly and provide an opportunity for staff and consumers to eat together socially.

Please collect your meals from the servery at the times above. We ask that you do not take crockery or cutlery into your bedroom.

Other Food & Drink

There is a selection of fruit available in between meals from the servery. Tea and coffee is available from the beverage bays located in the main area of AMHU.

Please check with staff regarding bringing other food items into AMHU. There are some restrictions for health reasons.

Two vending machines are available in the main area of AMHU for use 24hrs per day.

Medication

Medication plays an important part in the recovery process. It can be helpful in stabilising mood and addressing symptoms of mental illness.

Ask your doctor for information about your medication side effects and what to expect. Sometimes medication takes a little while to start working.

Medication times: approximately 8am, 12 noon, 5pm and 8pm.

See your nurse if you require medication outside of these times.

Community meeting

The Community Meeting is held each weekday morning. This provides a forum for orientation to the AMHU, discussion of the Therapeutic Group Program, and strategies for meeting daily needs.

Therapeutic Program

The therapeutic program aims to assist you in your recovery.

It is comprised of the Therapeutic Group Program (TGP) and individual interventions from the multi-disciplinary team.

The TGP covers a broad range of activities, to support you in nurturing your physical, emotional, social, mental, creative, and spiritual well being.

The groups and individual interventions complement each other to cater to varying needs.

Staff: Here to help

What is a multidisciplinary team?

A multidisciplinary team is made up of staff members from different professional disciplines. Together they combine their expertise to support your recovery and assist you to prepare for discharge.

Consultant Psychiatrist & Psychiatric Registrar

The Consultant Psychiatrist is the senior doctor in charge of your overall treatment. The Consultant Psychiatrist works with the Psychiatric Registrar to assess and diagnose your condition, and prescribe appropriate medical treatment and care. Please raise any concerns or ask questions about your treatment with your treating team.

Nurse

Your nurse will change from shift to shift. The nurses write notes outlining your progress for your treating team. Nurses are responsible for administering medications, daily care needs, physical assessment needs, psychoeducation and offering emotional support. Please speak with your nurse if you are experiencing any difficulties or have any questions in regards to your care.

Psychologists

The psychologist on the ward offers you individual counselling and psychotherapy to discuss and work through any difficulties you may be facing. They also facilitate psycho-educational groups that focus on specific psychological skills or strategies to improve your emotional well-being. The psychologist may also conduct an individual assessment that aims to help you, and your treating team, gain a better understanding of your symptoms and diagnosis, relative strengths and weaknesses, and any changes from how you were functioning previously.

Social Worker

Social Workers work with families and carers providing support, organising services and family interventions. Social Workers' involvement with family is also aimed at improving the lives of children of parents with mental illness.

Occupational Therapist

Occupational Therapists facilitate therapeutic groups and provide individual assessments and interventions with the aim of supporting recovery and life roles, enabling engagement in meaningful activities and development of life skills.

Welfare Officer

The Welfare Officer will provide information and support on your presenting social welfare needs.

Mental Health Rehabilitation Officer

The Mental Health Rehabilitation Officer works within the multi-disciplinary team, contributing to complex care discharge planning, linking you and community supports following discharge; and assisting with homelessness.

Tribunal Liaison Officer

The Tribunal Liaison Officer explains the formal processes of the Mental Health Tribunal. Feel free to ask any questions about any aspect of the Tribunal process.

Therapeutic Group Program Coordinator

The Therapeutic Group Program Coordinator oversees the scheduling, co-ordination, and facilitation of the TGP. The groups offered in the TGP at the AMHU include psycho-education, skill building, creative arts, social/recreational, physical activities, and engagement with the community.

Creative Arts Therapist

The Creative Arts Therapist uses an action based therapy, utilising a variety of creative, arts-based processes as part of therapeutic work to improve and enhance physical, mental and emotional well being. Creative Arts Therapy works through accessing and harnessing the power of the imagination and creativity, with emphasis on creation rather than product. It is a collaborative process that draws on the participant's skills and abilities to assist in their recovery. Creative modalities currently include visual art, clay work, drumming, drama/psychodrama and creative writing. Group and individual sessions are available.

Consumer Consultant

The Consumer Consultant's role is to promote the perspectives of consumers within the service. The Consumer Consultant participates in the Community Meeting, liaises with consumers and staff and provides feedback to the service as a whole.

Carer Consultant

The Carer Consultant is employed to promote the perspectives of families, friends, and carers within the Mental Health Service and support family sensitive practice.

Chaplain

Pastoral or spiritual care is available on an 'on call' basis and is considered an essential element of our model of care. The Chaplain is here for you as a listening ear and to provide emotional support.

Chapel services are held each week in the main part of the Canberra Hospital. A schedule of these services is posted in the Spiritual Room. There are also sacred

scriptures from a variety of faiths and other resources to enhance your private worship, such as prayer rugs and facilities for foot washing.

The Chaplain is happy to contact a particular faith group leader and help arrange for their visit.

Taking leave from AMHU

Leave can be arranged with the approval of the treating Consultant Psychiatrist. Consumers must be documented by staff upon leaving and when returning from leave.

The doctor may approve accompanied, day, overnight and/or weekend leave, depending on your health and safety.

Facilities

Laundry

AMHU is well equipped with two washing machines and two dryers. The laundry is situated in the Therapy Wing. Staff supervision is required when using the laundry. Laundry powder is available from the staff station. Sheets and towels are supplied and laundered by the Hospital.

Gymnasium

Your medical team must give their approval before you are able to use the gymnasium.

The Gym is open daily. It has a treadmill, exercise bikes and other equipment.

For your safety, appropriate clothing and footwear must be worn.

See your nurse for opening times and conditions of use.

Spiritual Room

The Spiritual Room is for everyone, welcoming people with faith or no faith. It is a quiet space for your own reflection/prayer or other activities of your faith or beliefs. You are welcome in this space whatever your beliefs. There are facilities in an adjacent area for washing prior to prayer/worship. The Chaplain from the Canberra Hospital holds a group called Soulfood here once a week, welcoming people with faith or no faith. It is not a religious group.

Games Room

The games room is open every day and has a pool table, television, board games, puzzles, stereo, games consoles and table tennis. There are smaller television areas provided if you prefer a quieter setting.

Basketball hoop

The basketball hoop can be used under supervision. Please see the Therapeutic Group Program Coordinator for access.

Hospital Cafe & Gift Shop

Cafe Hoz is located inside the main foyer of the Canberra Hospital. A selection of fresh sandwiches, salads, cakes, soup, hot drinks and other food items are available. The Hospital Gift Shop is also in the foyer and sells sweets, magazines and small gifts. The Gift Shop is open 7 days a week.

ATM

There are no ATM facilities at AMHU. There are two ATMs in the main foyer of the Canberra Hospital, located opposite the gift shop. Most cards are accepted.

Advocacy

There are a number of advocacy services in the ACT. Some services offer individual support while others focus on improving systems.

Individual advocacy

ACT Disability, Aged and Carer Advocacy Service

ADACAS is an independent community organisation that provides free advocacy and information for people with disabilities, including psychiatric disability, and vulnerable older people. An ADACAS advocate can assist you to assert your rights or interests or to have your needs met. Advocacy involves providing information, assisting with creating options, communicating your wishes and representing your views to others. ADACAS can be contacted on 6242 5065.

Public Advocate of the ACT

The Public Advocate provides advocacy for people who may not be able to advocate for themselves or represent their own best interests. The Public Advocate monitors the provision of services to people within the Adult Mental Health Unit to make sure that the rights of people are protected and their best interest promoted. If you want to speak with someone from the Public Advocates' Office, an advocate regularly visits the AMHU and is available to consult or can be contacted by phone on 6207 0707.

Systems Advocacy

Consumer Consultants

Consumer Consultants represent the consumer perspective on a range of committees and forums. They aim to improve the service for consumers by using their lived experience to make service improvements.

Official Visitors

Mental Health Official Visitors are independent of ACT Health and are appointed directly by the Minister for Health. Their role is to assess inpatient mental health facilities in the ACT to ensure they are providing the best possible care. Official Visitors visit AMHU each month. They also visit when requested or to follow up complaints or concerns. Official Visitors provide recommendations on their findings to the facilities, the Public Advocate and the Minister for Health. They can be contacted on 6205 5045.

ACT Mental Health Consumer Network

ACT Mental Health Consumer Network is an independent consumer-led organisation advocating for the interests of people with mental illness living in the ACT. ACTMHCN does not provide individual advocacy, but trains and supports consumers to engage in systemic advocacy. This improves mental health services based on the individual and collective experience of mental health consumers.

Legal Information

Legal Aid

Legal Aid provides a number of free services for mental health clients in the ACT.

People who have been detained in hospital under the Mental Health (Treatment and Care) Act 1994 can be advised and assisted by a legal aid duty lawyer at the hospital. Legal Aid can also assist people with applying for a grant of legal assistance if they need ongoing legal assistance or representation with other legal matters including criminal, family, guardianship, debt or other legal matters.

People can phone the Legal Aid Helpline on 1300 654 314 (8:30am – 5pm) weekdays.

Mental Health (Treatment and Care) Act 1994

The Mental Health (Treatment and Care) Act 1994 is the legislation that outlines the treatment, care, rehabilitation and protection for people with a mental illness in the ACT. People with a mental illness or mental dysfunction must be treated in a manner that is least restrictive of human rights. The Mental Health (Treatment and Care) Act 1994 aims to protect the rights of people while ensuring access to high quality and appropriate care. A copy of the Mental Health (Treatment and Care) Act 1994 is available through the Tribunal Liaison Officer.

ACT Human Rights Act 2004

Human rights are universal and enjoyed by all individuals in the ACT regardless of differences in gender, disability, nationality, race, religion etc. If you would like more information about your human rights or have concerns, you can ask staff for a brochure about the ACT Human Rights

Commission or contact them on 6205 2222. You can also visit their website at www.hrc.act.gov.au

Health Records (Privacy and Access) Act 1997

We are required by law to maintain records on specific areas of care that may be provided to you. The Health Records (Privacy and Access) Act 1997 states the circumstances under which this information may be shared with others. It also gives you the opportunity to access your personal health information. If you have concerns regarding your privacy, you can discuss these concerns with members of the staff team or contact the ACT Human Rights Commission on 6205 2222.

Privacy Act 1988

This is a law which applies throughout Australia and which regulates the handling of personal information about individuals. This includes the collection, use, storage and disclosure of personal information, and access to and correction of that information. If you have concerns regarding your privacy, you can discuss these concerns with members of the staff team or contact the ACT Human Rights Commission on 6205 2222.

For Carers and Families:

Connection with family is a very important part of the recovery process.

Visiting Hours

Please advise reception of your arrival. Staff will advise the consumer of your arrival. Consumers have the right to refuse a visitor. We ask that visitors use the lockers available in the reception area to store their belongings during their visit.

Weekdays: 12:30 – 1:30 and 4 – 8pm

Weekends: 9 – 8pm

Public holidays: 9 – 8.30pm

These visiting hours are timed to allow consumers to participate in the therapeutic program. If these times are not suitable, please speak with staff to make alternative arrangements.

Please confirm with staff prior to your visit if you plan to bring children to AMHU. Children must be supervised at all times. Family friendly spaces with toys are available.

Please note that only 2 visitors at a times are allowed in the High Dependency Unit. People under 16 are not permitted in this part of AMHU.

Phone calls

Family and friends are welcome to call AMHU on 6244 3210 between 10am and 8pm, seven days per week.

Support

The Social Workers who work on the unit are available to family and carers throughout an admission to offer support and linkages to other services. They can be contacted by phoning 6244 3210.

Carers ACT

Carers ACT is the recognised expert voice with, and for, carers while being the major provider of carer services and supports in the ACT. Carers ACT offer support such as information and advice, counselling, respite, support groups, educational and social activities. Call 1800 242 636.

Support after discharge

Planning for discharge begins as soon as possible after admission. The aim is for you to be well prepared to return to the community with appropriate supports in place.

On departure from AMHU, please be sure you are clear about:

- Instructions about medication dosages and side effects
- Any follow up appointments
- Any information for your family or carers
- Who to call in case you have questions or an emergency.

Community Mental Health Teams

City: 6205 1338

Woden: 6205 1488

Belconnen: 6205 1110

Tuggeranong: 6205 2777

Feedback and how to give it

Staff are committed to continuous quality improvement and appreciate that comments, complaints and feedback provide an excellent opportunity to understand our service from your perspective.

You may want to comment on a positive experience or report an issue so that it can be followed up and acted upon to prevent similar problems occurring with others.

The ACT Health consumer feedback program is called Listening & Learning. By **listening to** and **learning from** consumer feedback, it is possible for ACT Health staff to truly appreciate what consumers believe is quality and safe health care.

In the first instance please discuss any issues you have with the staff wherever this is possible. You can provide a comment, compliment or complaint:

- Directly through any staff member,
- Through the Consumer Engagement Feedback Team on (02) 6207 7627 or,
- Complete a Consumer and Carer Feedback form,
- Email HealthFeedback@act.gov.au

If you are not satisfied with the way your comment or complaint has been resolved you can make a complaint to the:

- Health Services Commissioner on (02) 6205 2222 or humanrights@act.gov.au
- Public Advocate of the ACT on (02) 6207 0707 or pa@act.gov.au

Questions to ask your treating team

When you speak with someone from the treating team, it's a good opportunity to ask questions and clarify information. Below is an extensive list from which you can choose relevant questions that apply to your situation¹:

About the diagnosis:

- What diagnosis have I been given?
- What signs/symptoms suggest this?
- What is known about the cause of this diagnosis?
- What is likely to happen in the future?
- If a diagnosis has not been made, what are the possibilities?
- Are there any general health implications?

About your assessment:

- What tests have been done?
- Are there other tests that might be needed?
- Are there any physical problems that have been discovered?
- If so, what treatment is needed?

About care and treatment:

- What are the aims of care and treatment?
- Who else will be involved in my treatment?
- How often will you see me?
- What is your treatment plan for me?
- How long will I need treatment?
- What happens if I refuse treatment?
- Can I choose when I leave?
- What is my legal standing under the Mental Health Act? How does this affect me?
- How will my family/friends/carers be involved in discussions concerning my treatment?

1. Adapted from Royal College of Psychiatrists and The Princess Trust for Carers, Partners in Care Campaign, *A checklist for carers of people with mental health problems 2012 (UK)*

About medication:

- What medication will be used?
- What are the benefits? – short term and long term
- What are the possible side effects? – short term and long term
- Does this medication interact with other medications and/or complementary therapies (such as vitamins, supplements, natural remedies)?
- Why has this medication been chosen?
- How long will I need to take this medication?
- Are there other medications that can be used if this one doesn't work?
- Are there ways to manage the illness other than medication?
- What else can I do to improve my wellness and recovery?
- What will happen if I stop taking this medication?
- Do you have any written information about this medication?

Discharge from Hospital:

- How long will I stay in hospital?
- What arrangements will be made for me after leaving hospital?
- When will these arrangements start?

NOTES

Accessibility

The ACT Government is committed to making its information, services, events and venues as accessible as possible.

If you have difficulty reading a standard printed document and would like to receive this publication in an alternative format such as large print, please phone 13 22 81 or email HealthACT@act.gov.au

If English is not your first language and you require the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS), please call 13 14 50.

If you are Deaf, or have a speech or hearing impairment and need the teletypewriter service, please phone 13 36 77 and ask for 13 22 81.

For speak and listen users, please phone 1300 555 727 and ask for 13 22 81. For more information on these services visit <http://www.relaysservice.com.au>

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