

**2018**

**THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE  
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

**ACT Health's Response to the Recommendations of the  
Independent Review of Mental Health Inpatient Services with ACT  
Health 22 – 23 May 2018**

**Presented by  
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Minister for Mental Health  
29 November 2018**



#	Recommendation	Mental Health Advisory Body Response as of 18 October 2018
1.a	MHJHADS should consider a sustained program of national and/or international recruitment for nurses and senior medical staff as a means to ensuring regular supply throughout the year. If recruiting nurses from overseas, MHJHADS should preference nurses with specialist mental health qualifications.	<p><b>Accepted. In progress</b></p> <p>The Advisory Body agreed that MHJHADS should develop an action plan for nursing for national and international recruitment similar to the work underway for medical staff.</p> <p>A MHJHADS Workforce Committee has been convened and a project officer has commenced. A MHJHADS workforce action plan will be developed in parallel to the ACT Health Workforce Strategy.</p>
1.b	MHJHADS should consider increasing both the number and the percentage of nursing staff who have specialist mental health qualifications as a means to ensuring that an appropriate balance is struck between attending to ligature safety risks in infrastructure vs mitigation of the risk of patients deliberately self-harming by enhancing the nursing skills that support therapeutic engagement with patients in inpatient settings.	<p><b>Accepted. In progress</b></p> <p>The Advisory Body agreed that MHJHADS review the number of current Mental Health Post Grad nurses and develop a plan for an incremental improvement.</p> <p>A MHJHADS Workforce Committee has been convened and a project officer has commenced. A MHJHADS workforce action plan will be developed in parallel to the ACT Health Workforce Strategy.</p>
2.a	MHJHADS should participate in the current review of corporate governance structures being undertaken across ACT Health with a view to clarifying the reporting relationships and explicating the accountability processes.	<p><b>Accepted. In progress</b></p> <p>MHJHADS provided a submission, on behalf of the Advisory Body, to the Interim Director General for consideration into the ACT Health Organisational Restructure. Following the Restructure, this submission has since been provided to Canberra Health Services.</p>
2.b	MHJHADS should adopt clear criteria and timelines for the investigation and reporting of critical incidents and sentinel events	<p><b>Accepted. CLOSED by the Mental Health Advisory Body</b></p> <p>MHJHADS has provided a submission, including policy from the North Western Mental Health (NWMH) services, on behalf of the Advisory Body to the Executive Director of Quality and Safety Branch for consideration into the existing work being undertaken on the ACT Health Incident Management Policy. The implementation of this work, including policy updates, currently sits with the Quality and Safety Branch.</p>
2.c	The reviewers recommend that a Root Cause Analysis (RCA) be undertaken for all sentinel events and that ideally these be completed within 30 days but definitely within 60 days. The	<p><b>Accepted. CLOSED by the Mental Health Advisory Body</b></p> <p>MHJHADS has provided a submission (including the NWMH policy) on behalf of the Advisory Body to the Executive Director of Quality and Safety Branch</p>

	service should also seek to ensure external participation on RCA investigative panels	for consideration into the existing work being undertaken on the ACT Health Incident Management Policy. The implementation of this work, including policy updates, currently sits with the Quality and Safety Branch.
2.d	MHJHADS should consider adopting a governance model at team/unit level which has a Lead Consultant and a Program Manager heading up each program. Under this model both partners have equal power and authority and work together to manage the program. Under this model the Lead Consultant is responsible for managing junior and senior medical staff, medicolegal matters, legal responsibilities in regard to patients treated under the Mental Health Act and standards of care; the Program Manager is responsible for managing nursing, allied health and administrative staff, oversight of systems and processes and the operational management of the Program.	<b>Accepted. In progress</b> The Advisory Body agreed that MHJHADS should progress the recommendation and provide a submission back to the Advisory Body.
3	MHJHADS should consider embedding quality improvement staff with the remit and skills to support quality improvement activities within the structures of the mental health service as a means to positively influence staff on the ground and effect change in mental health service delivery.	<b>Accepted. CLOSED by the Mental Health Advisory Body</b> MHJHADS has provided a submission on behalf of the Advisory Body, to the Interim Director General for consideration into the ACT Health Organisational Restructure. The implementation of this work currently sits with the Quality and Safety Branch. Quality Officers were aligned to MHJHADS in September 2018.
4.a	MHJHADS should undertake further work in the area of Occupational Violence as a means to improving safety in the acute inpatient unit and to ensure that the High Dependency Unit is not consumed with providing care for the aggressive, violent patient at the expense of the vulnerable, passive and agitated depressed patient.	<b>Accepted. In progress.</b> The Advisory Body agreed that MHJHADS would undertake further work in the area of Occupational Violence. An ACT Health Workplace Strategy is being developed, alongside the Nurse Safety Strategy. MHJHADS are working on the divisional specific action plans to fit within those strategic documents.
4.b	We noted that AMHU does not have an internal CCTV system in place. In addressing the key issues of Occupational Violence and Ligation Safety consideration should be given to introduce CCTV in patient areas such as reception, lounge areas, courtyards etc. as a tool to aid and support identification of incidents that may	<b>Accepted. In progress.</b> The Advisory Body agreed that through the work in the area of Occupational Violence, MHJHADS will undertake further work related to the introduction of CCTV cameras in AMHU.

	<p>be attended to prior to escalation. In addition CCTV can assist observation of any prohibited substances or potential weapons brought into the Unit. With a total foot print of approximately 7,800 sq metres the AMHU is an extensive area to monitor and retain vigilance of internal and external activities. In addition, CCTV cameras serve to deter malicious property damage and occupational violence and CCTV cameras greatly assist the investigation of critical incidents and also supports the prosecution of individuals who engage in malicious property damage and interpersonal violence.</p>	
5	<p>MHJHADS should consider convening, or joining an external benchmarking group for mortality and morbidity to gain an ongoing understanding as to how it performs in this regard against peer services.</p>	<p><b>Accepted. In progress.</b> The Advisory Body agreed that MHJHADS should undertake external benchmarking. This is currently being actioned.</p>
6.a	<p>MHJHADS should remove Microshield brand soap dispensers from patient areas such as ensuite bathrooms, activity rooms and circulation spaces in inpatient units. These dispensers are firmly attached to walls and constitute a ligature attachment risk.</p>	<p><b>Accepted. In progress.</b> The Advisory Body agreed that MHJHADS should liaise with Business Support Services to review the current soap dispensers used in the inpatient mental health units. It is anticipated that this will be completed as soon as the supplier for new dispensers is outlined, which is expected by the end of 2018.</p>
6.b	<p>MHJHADS should correct (swap) the signage for the staff and patient toilets in the external area of the Dhulwa unit because as things stand currently, patients have access to a number of ligature hazards in the incorrectly designated 'patient toilet'</p>	<p><b>Accepted. CLOSED by the Mental Health Advisory Body</b></p>