Looking at the Mental Health Act in 2017/18

Easy read booklet
February 2019
About CQC

We are the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

We check services like

• care homes

• care in people’s homes

• hospitals

• doctors’ surgeries.

We make sure they are giving good health and social care to people.
We also make sure they follow a law called the **Mental Health Act (MHA)** and that they respect people’s human rights and support them to get better.

The **Mental Health Act (MHA)** is a law that helps doctors and nurses decide if a person with a mental health problem needs to be kept and treated in hospital.

Services also need to respect a person’s human rights if they are kept in hospital because of this law. This means making sure people are treated fairly.
About this booklet

We have written a report about how mental health services work with the Mental Health Act (MHA).

The report is called ‘Monitoring the Mental Health Act in 2017/18’.

The report looks at

- how mental health services followed the MHA in 2017/18

- how mental health services provided treatment to people to help them get better
• how mental health services make sure their staff understand and follow the MHA Code of Practice.

The MHA Code of Practice is a set of rules that tell staff how to care for a patient.

This booklet tells you what we found out in the report.

We have worked closely with the Independent Mental Health Act Review team to share information from our reports over the last 10 years.
What we found out in our report

• Even though mental health services are trying to save money, we have found that services can also still get better.

• Our greatest worry is about the level and safety of care given on mental health wards. This is mainly on wards for adults of working age.

• We found that patients and carers are more involved in planning their care. But some care plans are still not good enough.

This might be because there is poor planning. Or it might be because some patients and carers are not involved in the planning.
Sometimes there is no proof that patients have agreed to treatment when they stay in hospital.

Many services need to make more effort to follow the rules of the MHA Code of Practice.

They need to involve patients more in planning their care and to help them make decisions about their treatment.
CQC and the Mental Health Act

We also did lots of other work in 2017/18.

- We made more than 1,000 visits. We met with almost 4,000 patients. And we told services to make over 6,000 actions.

- Our **Second Opinion Appointed Doctor** service made over 14,500 visits to look at people’s care plans. They changed some people’s treatment plans during their visits.

A **Second Opinion Appointed Doctor** is a doctor who does not work at the hospital where a patient is staying and can check decisions made about the patient.
• We had more than 2,000 complaints and questions about the way the Mental Health Act was used by staff on patients.

• We looked at the reasons why people died in hospital. More than 180 people died of natural causes. This means they died naturally from an illness or disease. Nearly 50 people died not of natural causes. We are still waiting to find out about the reasons for 10 other people.

• We were told of more than 700 times people left hospital without letting staff know.
How to contact CQC

If you would like this booklet in another format or language, or you would like to tell us something, you can get in touch with us.

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