



Department  
of Health &  
Social Care



# Mental Health Bill

How we want to change  
parts of Mental Health Law



# What is in this booklet

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Department  
of Health &  
Social Care

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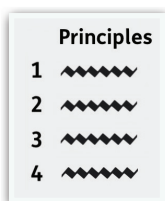
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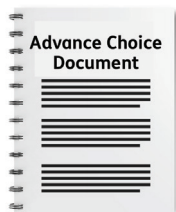
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# Who we are and what we want to do



We are the Department for Health and Social Care and Ministry of Justice. We are part of the **Government**.



The **Government** leads the country.



We want to make mental health care better for people.



We want to make changes so that people do not stay in hospital unless they need to.



When people do have to stay in hospital, it is important that they get good care and treatment.



# The law and how we want to change it



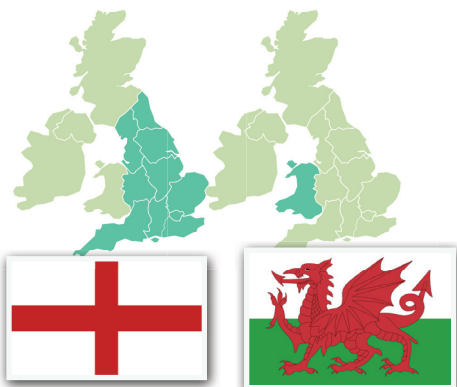
The Mental Health Act tells people what to do if they need to stay in hospital because they are in **crisis**.

**Crisis** is when you need help straightaway because of your mental health.



The law says you can be sent to hospital for your care and treatment when you need to for your safety, or to protect other people.

This is called being **detained**. Some people know this as being **sectioned**.



This law is only for England and Wales.

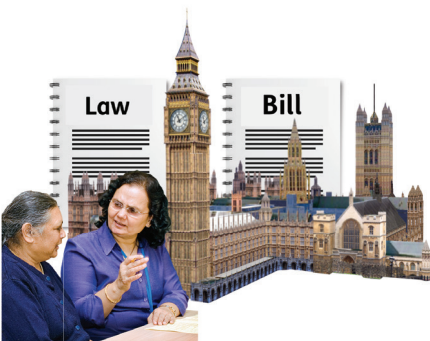


We want to change the law.  
When you want to change the law,  
you use a **Bill**.



We write our ideas in a Bill and show  
it to **Parliament**.

**Parliament** is where people called  
politicians meet to talk about the  
work of the Government.



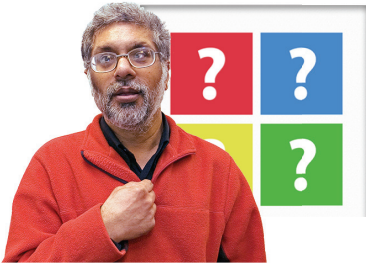
They also talk about and agree  
changes to the law.

## Why we want to change the law



We decided to make changes to the  
law after there was a big **review**.

**Review** means we looked to see if the  
Mental Health Act is still working.



We want to make changes so that you have more choice in:



- What happens if you have a mental health crisis.



- Who is involved in your care.



- What treatment you are given and why.



You will have more **rights** to say what you want to happen with your care and treatment.

Your **rights** are things you are allowed to do and how you should be treated.

# Principles



A **principle** is an idea or rule that explains or tells you how something happens or works.



We worked closely with people who use mental health services to do our review.



Our review helped us come up with 4 principles that we need to do to make things better.

Our principles are:

## 1. **Respect people's views and choices**

This means listening to what you want in your mental health care.

In the Bill we call this **Choice and Autonomy**.





## 2. Limit peoples freedom as little as possible



This means using the law in the right way so you are not taken to hospital if you don't need to be.

In the Bill we call this **Least Restriction**.

## 3. Give people the help they need to feel better



This means helping you get the right treatment and support you need to feel well.

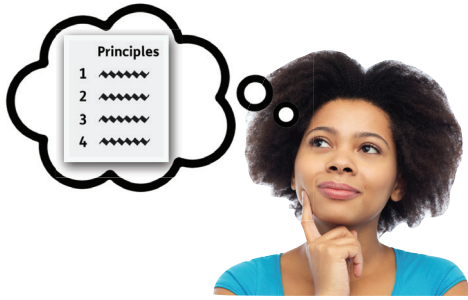
In the Bill we call this **Therapeutic Benefit**.

## 4. Respect people as individuals

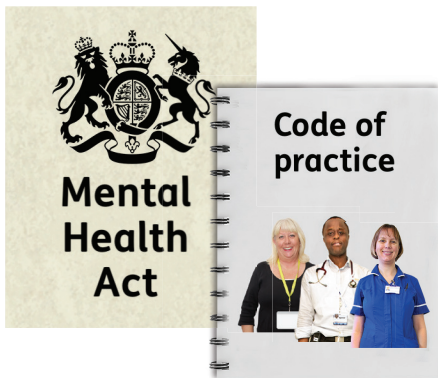


This means treating you with respect, understanding you and what you need.

In the Bill we call this **The Person as an Individual**.



We have thought about these principles in everything we have done in the Bill.

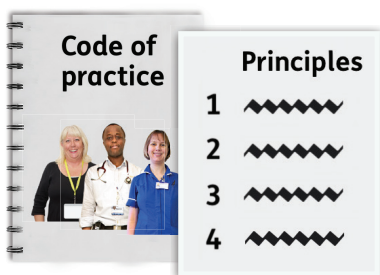


The **Code of Practice** is a set of rules that services must follow when they use the Mental Health Act.

Services like hospitals and **social care**.



**Social care** is care that you get in your own home or in the local community. This might be in places like a day centre or care home.



We will make sure that the principles are put in the **Code of Practice**.

# Changes to the law that are better for you



We want you to get more care and support in the community.



Under the Bill, doctors or people who are in charge of your care will:

## 1. Listen to what you want in your mental health care.



Your doctor or other health staff will listen and talk to you and your family and friends.



They will ask you about what you want to happen and make sure this is written down.



## 2. People will only use the Mental Health Act when it is needed.



Going to hospital should only happen if nothing else is working for you.

The Bill will:



- Help people understand you as a person and give you more of a say over your treatment.

and



- Make sure you are listened to and your voice is heard. It will help you to make choices about what care and treatment you want.





You will only have to go to hospital if there is a very big chance you might:

- Seriously hurt yourself.



- Not get better if you don't go to hospital.



- Seriously hurt other people.

# Getting the right treatment in hospital



Sometimes, people need to be made to stay in hospital to keep themselves and others safe.



If you are made to go to hospital, the Bill says there has to be a very good reason for it.



Before coming into hospital, staff have got to decide where is the best place for you to get treatment.



Hospital must be the best place to give you the treatment and support you need.



When you are ready, you might get treatment at home instead of in the hospital.

I want



## Getting the right treatment

The Bill will say that you can tell doctors the treatment you want.



But to do this, you have to be able to make decisions for yourself about what is best for you. This is called having **capacity**.



Under the Bill, you can talk to your doctor and tell them what you think works best for you.



They will listen to what you say. They will tell you why they want you to have some types of medicine or treatment.



There might be a treatment that you don't want to have. If this treatment helps to keep you safe, you will still have to have it.



This might be because the medication is the only one that works to keep you well.



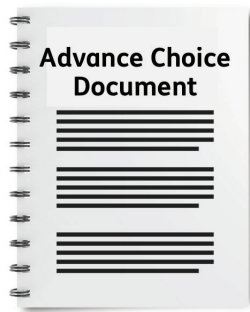
If you do not agree with the doctor, you can get a **second opinion**.



A **second opinion** is when another doctor is asked to check what treatments might be best for you.



# Advance Choice Documents



An **Advance Choice Document** lets people say what care and treatment they want before they get ill.



This means doctors can still know what help you would like if you are too poorly to make decisions.



People can use an Advance Choice Document to say:

- What treatment they do and do not want if they became ill.



- Who they would want as their **Nominated Person**. A **nominated person** is someone who can make decisions and speak for you.



The Bill says that services must tell people about Advance Choice Documents.



Services should support people to write their own Advance Choice Document, if they want one.



## Care and treatment plans

The Bill says everyone should have a care and treatment plan.



Your doctor will write your care and treatment plan with you.



The plan should say:

- What you want to happen with your treatment.



- Who you want to be involved in decisions about your care.



Your doctor or the person who is looking after you will look at your care and treatment to see if it is still working.



They will talk to you about your needs and if you want to change anything in your plan.



Your doctor will do everything they can to make sure you are not taken to hospital.



They will only allow this if it the best thing for you in your care and treatment plan.



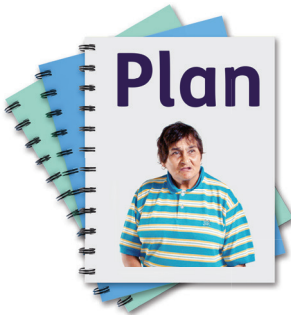
## More about care and treatment plans



You can ask your **advocate** or nominated person to help with the plan.



**Advocates** help you to speak out for yourself and have your say.



The plan should link in with your other care plans.



This means that everyone involved in your care knows what is happening.



If something is not right or you are not happy with your care in hospital, you can tell us. This is called making a **complaint**.



The people who care for you must tell you how to do this and give you the right information.

# Nominated person



A **nominated person** can speak for you if you are unable to make decisions yourself.



It is important that you choose someone who knows you well and who you can trust.



The Bill says you can:

- Choose the nominated person you want, so it doesn't have to be chosen for you.
- Say that your nominated person must be asked about your treatment and anything that happens to you in hospital.



# Going to a tribunal

You might not agree that you need to stay in hospital.

You might need to use the law to get a judge to say you can leave hospital. This is called going to a **tribunal**.



A tribunal is like a court of law.



At a tribunal, people like lawyers, doctors and social workers look at what everyone says and decide what should happen.



The tribunal will decide if you should be kept in hospital.





The Bill says there should be more tribunals for people.



This will make sure you do not have to stay in hospital for longer than you need to be.



## People who have been in trouble with the law



Some people who need care and treatment for their mental health might be in trouble with the law. They might be in prison.



The Bill says that people should not have to wait a long time to be taken to hospital for treatment.



The Bill also says that people cannot be taken to police cells or prisons as a **place of safety**.

**A place of safety** is a place people are made to stay for their own safety or for other people's protection.



You do not stay in a place of safety for long. A doctor comes to see you. They will check to see if hospital is the best place for you to go.



Some people are in hospital because a court said they must stay there until they get better.



At the moment, some of these people might have to stay in hospital even if it is no longer helping them.

This is because it helps to keep other people safe.



The Bill says they should have the chance to live in the community under very safe rules.

We call these rules **conditions**.



It is better to do this than to keep a person in hospital if it is not helping them anymore.

# People with a learning disability and autistic people



The mental health law can help people to get the right support in hospital for a mental health condition.



The Bill says that mental health law cannot be used to keep people with a learning disability or autistic people in hospital for more than 28 days.



If they also have a mental health condition that can be helped in hospital, they can be made to stay for longer.



If a person with a learning disability or autistic person is in trouble with the law, they can be sent to hospital instead of prison.



Some people people might be told to stay in hospital under the mental health law.



If they do the Bill says they should have a **care education and treatment review**.

A **care education and treatment review** is a meeting to see how an autistic person or a person with a learning disability is being cared for.



The person should only have a review if they agree to it.



This will help people to leave hospital as soon as they are ready.



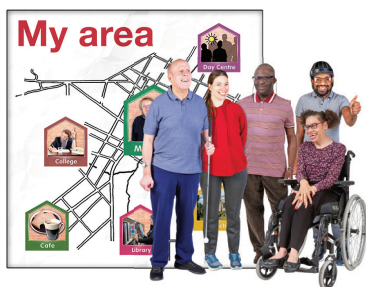
## Supporting people in the community



People with a learning disability and autistic people don't always need to be in hospital to get the right support.



A **Dynamic Support Register** is a list of people who need support. Hospital, health and care staff should use the **register** to:



- Understand the needs of people with a learning disability and autistic people in the area

and

- Make sure people are getting the right support.



People must be asked first if they want to be put on the register. Staff must listen to what the person decides.



# Leaving hospital

You might be able to leave hospital when:



- You feel better able to cope with your mental health

and

- You do not need to be in hospital anymore.



When you leave hospital it is called being **discharged**.



The Bill says that your doctor must look at your care before you leave.



Your doctor must speak to another person involved in your care before they decide if you can be discharged.



Together they must make sure you have the right treatment and support you need to leave hospital.

# Getting care after you leave hospital



You may have the right to get special care and treatment after you leave hospital.



This is to make sure you can manage in the community and don't have to go back to hospital. This is called **after care**.



You might also be given a **Community Treatment Order** by your doctor.

The order says what care and treatment you need to stay safe and well at home.



The Bill makes it harder to be put on a community treatment order if it is not the right thing for you.

