

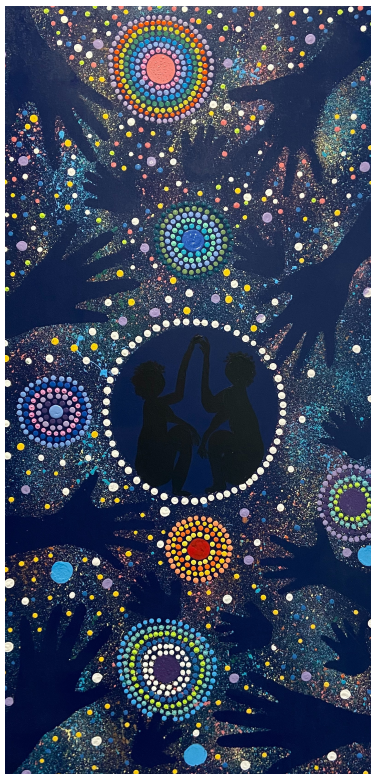
# RECOVERY

MAGAZINE  
ISSUE ONE



Health  
Illawarra Shoalhaven  
Local Health District

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



The Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District operates on the lands of the Dharawal and Yuin nations, which encompass five language groups: Wadi Wadi, Dharawal, Wandandian, Walbanga and Yuin.

We acknowledge that Aboriginal people are the oldest living continuous culture and have been here for over 65,000 years. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging. We recognise that Aboriginal people have remained strong, resilient and resourceful and have a continuing connection to culture, customs, lands and waterways across the region.

We acknowledge people with a lived experience of mental health challenges. We also acknowledge the experiences of their families and significant others. We envisage and hold hope for all to live a purposeful and meaningful life.

Artists - Lorraine Brown and Narelle Thomas  
Name of Painting - Created hands of community

# WELCOME

Recovery is unique and individual to each person.

The Recovery Magazine has been designed to provide you with information about how the Wollongong Hospital Mental Health Unit runs and how we can provide treatment and support to assist you in your recovery.

This magazine will help you to be involved in your care. Your treatment needs to reflect the aspects of your life that are important in your recovery.

With treatment and support people can recover and live a fulfilling and satisfying life.



## WOLLONGONG HOSPITAL MENTAL HEALTH UNIT

# INFORMATION & HOUSEKEEPING

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### **Where am I?**

You are in the The Wollongong Hospital Mental Health Unit, located on Level 3 of The Wollongong Hospital. The staff are here to help and support your wellness and recovery. When you are admitted to the unit, nursing staff will show you around to orientate you.

Mental Health Unit reception: (02) 4253 4300

Nurses station: (02) 4253 4305

### **How long will I be here?**

It can be hard to predict how long you need to stay in hospital. How long you stay will depend on many things. This includes how well you respond to treatment and the services you need. This will be part of your treatment plan which you are encouraged to discuss with your psychiatrist and nurse.

### **Can I have Visitors?**

Visitors are welcome on the unit during designated visiting hours. Please see your nurse for visiting times as they may change. Visitors should only use the communal areas including dining room, lounge room and courtyard. A family room is available for visitors under 14 years of age.

### **Can I have leave from the unit?**

Leave is assessed on an individual basis by your psychiatrist. Leave is used to support your treatment and discharge. It is likely leave will not be approved in the first few days of arriving.

You must not use illegal drugs or alcohol whilst in hospital or on leave.

### **What is a "Consumer"?**

A consumer is a person who accesses mental health services for treatment and support of mental health issues.

## **Your Room**

Bedrooms are closed between the hours of 10am and 12.30pm for cleaning. You will need to organise yourself and your belongings prior, as access to your room will be restricted. You are not permitted to enter another person's room. Your assigned room may change throughout your stay.

## **Linen**

Linen is provided. Each weekend you are provided with fresh linen for your bed.

## **Laundry**

The laundry is located in the courtyard and can be accessed between 9am and 8pm. Your nurse can provide you with laundry powder.

## **Phone**

The phone on the unit is available between 9am and 9pm. Please limit calls to 10 minutes. To make a call dial 0 (zero) for an outside line. The unit phone number is: (02) 4253 4309.

## **Meals**

All meals are served in our dining room (times can vary).

Breakfast: 7:45am - 8:15am	Afternoon tea: 3pm - 3:20pm
Morning tea: 10am - 10:20am	Dinner: 5pm - 5:30pm
Lunch: 11:45am - 12:30pm	Supper: 7:30pm - 7:50pm

Vending machines are available for snacks. Please note the vending machine accepts coins.

## **Smoking**

NSW Health has a no smoking policy. Smoking is not permitted whilst you are in hospital. Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) is available to assist you with any withdrawal symptoms. Please talk to your nurse if you would like more information and support in managing your nicotine withdrawal.





### **Mutual Expectations**

It is important that the unit is a safe space for all. Please ensure that your actions and language are respectful to staff and others. Staff will be respectful of your needs and are here to support and care for you while you are in hospital. There is a list of mutual expectations located on the window of the nurses' station.

### **Safety and Security**

We have a number of ways of making sure you are safe and secure while you are staying here.

You and your belongings will be checked when you arrive and each time you return from leave. Any items considered harmful will be stored by staff and returned to you when you leave hospital. Items that will be removed include plastic bags, razors, glass containers, medications, lighters and all electrical equipment. Certain clothing items may also be deemed unsuitable including belts, cords and shoelaces. A full list of prohibited items is displayed in the unit.

Items brought to the unit by visitors are subject to the same screening process. Visitors will be asked to lock their belongings in a locker outside the unit before entering.

CCTV Cameras are used in the unit for safety and security in communal areas. There are no cameras in bedrooms, toilets and bathrooms.

### **Mobile Phones**

General use of mobile phones and personal devices is not permitted in the unit. If you need to access these items for a specific purpose during your stay this will need to be organised with staff.

### **What about my valuables?**

If you have items of value, they will be placed in our safe, as we do not take responsibility for belongings or replace property that has been misplaced or damaged. Valuables (including mobile phones, chargers, keys, wallets, bank cards, cameras and laptops) will all need to be kept in the safe during your stay and returned to you on the day you leave hospital.

The hours to access the safe are at 11am or 3pm Mon - Fri. If the plan is for you to be discharged over a weekend, your nurse will organise retrieval of your valuables from the safe during the week. If you are leaving the hospital over the weekend and it has not been planned for, you will need to arrange collection during the week with nursing staff.

Your bedroom has a lockable cupboard which may be used to securely store other personal items that are not required to be stored in the safe.

We strongly encourage no lending or borrowing of belongings.

### **Will you be talking to my family or carers about me?**

We would like to include your family, carers or support people in your treatment and care plan. When you first arrive in to hospital we will ask you to name someone that we can include in your care and share information with.

If you are staying here involuntarily under the Mental Health Act, there is some information that we must share with your family or carer. If you are unable to identify someone then your psychiatrist will nominate a 'designated carer' for you.

### **Support for Family and Carers**

There are services that can support your family and carers. Stride is a Family and Carer program designed to provide support, information and education to improve overall mental health and wellbeing for your support network. For more information or referral please speak with any of the staff.

Family & Carer Information folders are available. Please request an information pack from staff if you have not already been provided with one.



# WHO MAY BE INVOLVED IN MY CARE?

There are many professionals that can form part of your treating team whilst you are in hospital. We also encourage you, your family and supports to be part of your care, treatment and recovery.

## The Medical Team

### Psychiatrist

During your stay in hospital you will be allocated a psychiatrist. Psychiatrists are doctors who specialise in diagnosing and treating people with mental illness. They can work with you to develop a treatment plan and prescribe medications. A psychiatry registrar will also work with you under the supervision of your psychiatrist.

You will see your psychiatrist more often when you first come in to the mental health unit. Routinely you will see a psychiatrist at least once a week. You will usually not see a psychiatrist on weekends.



### Nurse

Nurses provide care and support for your medical and mental health needs. Each nursing shift your allocated nurse will be written up on the lounge room whiteboard. Your nurse is your first point of contact for any concerns.



### Medical Doctor

Doctors and Junior Medical Officers (JMO) are available to care for your medical needs. Please see your nurse if you have any medical concerns and would like to see a doctor.

### What about medication?

You and your psychiatrist will have talked about the best medication for you. During your stay, this medication will be given to you by nurses. You will not be taking any other medication of your own. Please ask your nurse or treating team if you have any questions about your medication. Staff can also give you printed information on the medications you are taking.



# Peer Support



## Peer Worker

A peer worker is someone who has a lived experience of a mental health issue or illness and is walking the path of recovery. A peer worker is trained in how to support you through drawing on their own experience of recovery.

During your stay a peer worker can provide:

- General support and advocacy (to help you express your views and concerns to staff)
- Attend psychiatry appointments and tribunals to advocate and assist you to understand your treatment and care
- Support to raise issues, concerns, suggestions, compliments or complaints
- Facilitate groups on staying well and relapse prevention
- Help you to develop recovery goals
- Assist with connecting to peer support when leaving hospital

To get in contact either speak directly to the peer worker on the unit or alternatively you can let your nurse know who will pass on your request.

## Peer STOC

Peer Supported Transfer of Care (Peer STOC) – A peer worker can support you for up to six weeks in the community once you leave hospital. They can walk alongside you whilst you are working towards your recovery goals, help you build on your strengths and develop relapse prevention strategies. They can meet with you in hospital before you leave. For more information please discuss with your treating team.

# The Allied Health Team



## Psychologist

Can help with identifying and diagnosing behavioural and emotional disorders.

They can help you learn strategies to manage symptoms of depression, anxiety, stress, mood disorders and other mental health issues so you can get the most out of life.



## Dietician

Can work with you to reach nutrition goals such as managing the side effects of medications, changes in hunger, energy levels and weight. They can talk about how good nutrition can help your mood, explore and suggest meal ideas, healthy recipes on a budget and help with addressing medical conditions.

## Social Worker

Can work with you to find solutions to practical issues you may be struggling with. They can chat with you about government payments, reporting to Centrelink, the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), your housing and community supports.

## Diversional Therapist

Can provide recreational activities tailored to your interests, hobbies, creativity, relaxation and recovery. They can also provide information about local leisure, social and community groups you can access.

## Exercise Physiologist

Can prescribe you an exercise program that suits your needs, abilities and motivation level. They can address any barriers and help connect you to community programs. They can see you individually or in weekly scheduled exercise groups.

## Occupational Therapist

Can assist you with developing skills and confidence in activities of daily living at home and in your community. They can connect you with mental health support services and assist you in identifying recovery goals. They can also help with your plans for returning home and can discuss any concerns you may have when leaving hospital.



You can meet the Allied Health Team at the Monday Morning Meeting and learn more about how they can assist you during your stay in hospital. You can also ask your nurse to make a referral on your behalf. Allied health staff availability is displayed on a poster in the lounge room.

## Other Services

### Aboriginal Mental Health Worker



If you identify as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person you can request an Aboriginal Mental Health Worker. We have staff who work within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific and identified roles; providing an integrated and culturally safe environment for Aboriginal consumers.

### Chaplaincy

A chaplain can help with your spiritual, worship or pastoral needs. If you would like to see a member of the interdenominational chaplaincy team please let your nurse know.

### Interpreter Services

Can assist if you do not speak English, have limited English, or are Deaf. Professional and confidential interpreting services are available in most community languages, including AUSLAN (Australian Sign Language). They can be used to help us understand your needs when you and your family meet with the treating team.



### Drug and Alcohol Service

Illawarra Shoalhaven Drug and Alcohol Service offers a range of treatment and support services for people who have issues with alcohol, prescription or other drugs. They also offer support for families and carers. All services are confidential and non-judgmental.

If you would like a referral to see someone from the Drug and Alcohol team speak to your nurse and they will arrange for someone to see you whilst you are in hospital.



### Stride

Families and carers need support too. At Stride, services are designed to help families and carers learn skills that support their own wellbeing. Stride Family & Carer Program can provide one on one support, information, education and group programs.

They are located in Wollongong (02) 4229 7254 and Nowra (02) 4422 1547.

# THE MENTAL HEALTH ACT

**The NSW Mental Health Act is legislation that governs the way in which care and treatment is provided to people who experience a mental illness or disorder. The Act aims to ensure that people receive the best possible care and treatment in the least restrictive way.**

**It is important you are aware of your legal status and your rights and responsibilities. This information can be further explained by nursing staff or discussed during your meeting with the psychiatrist.**

**There are two ways that a person can be admitted to a mental health unit: as a voluntary consumer or an involuntary consumer.**

## WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE VOLUNTARY?

A voluntary consumer is a person who voluntarily remains in a mental health facility for treatment, care or observation. The criteria for admission is that the authorised medical officer determines a person is likely to benefit from care or treatment as a voluntary consumer and that the consumer agrees to the admission. Being a voluntary consumer means that no treatment can be provided to you without informed consent.

### Right to information

If you have been admitted as a voluntary consumer you will be provided with a 'Statement of Rights' which outlines your right to information about your treatment, your right to discharge yourself, your right to nominate a designated carer and your right to see an Official Visitor. Verbal explanation of these rights should also be provided.

### How do I request discharge?

If you are thinking about discharging yourself you need to let staff know. Although you are a voluntary consumer you are still required to be reviewed by the psychiatrist upon requesting discharge to ensure there is a safe plan in place for you when you leave.

## WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE INVOLUNTARY?

An involuntary consumer is someone who is admitted in to a hospital or psychiatric unit for care and treatment under the Mental Health Act 2007. You can only be detained if a psychiatrist believes you are 'a mentally ill person' or 'a mentally disordered person' as defined under the Mental Health Act.

### Right to information

If you have been admitted as an involuntary consumer you will be provided with a 'Statement of Rights' which outlines your right to information about your treatment, your right to discharge yourself, your right to nominate a designated carer and your right to see an Official Visitor. A verbal explanation of these rights should also be provided.

### Right to apply to be discharged

Any person who has been detained in a mental health facility has the right to apply either verbally or in writing, to be discharged. If you wish to request to be discharged, tell a staff member that you want to be discharged. Complete the request for discharge form which can be provided to you.

### What happens once you have lodged the request?

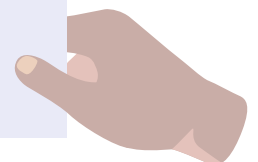
You must be seen by a psychiatrist and they will make the decision within three working days. If you are not discharged or have not been given an answer that satisfies you within the three working days, you can appeal to the tribunal. Please talk to your nurse, peer worker or the treating team who can explain the process. The peer worker can help you prepare for the tribunal.

### What is the Mental Health Review Tribunal?

The Mental Health Review Tribunal is an independent body that has powers to make decisions under the Mental Health Act. If you have been brought in to hospital against your will, it is the role of the tribunal to ensure that you are not kept in hospital against your will unless the requirements of the Mental Health Act have been met. All involuntary consumers will be reviewed by the tribunal within 2 weeks. Legal representation is offered free of charge by solicitors through the Mental Health Advocacy service. You have the right to have a support person with you when you are attending a tribunal.

#### What is a community treatment order (CTO)?

You may leave the hospital on a CTO. A CTO is a legal order made by the tribunal which sets out a plan as to how you will receive treatment in the community when you leave hospital. Talk to your psychiatrist if you would like to know more about a CTO.



# WAYS TO BE INVOLVED IN YOUR CARE



## Meeting with your Psychiatrist

During meetings with your psychiatrist you will discuss your progress and treatment plan. This is an opportunity for you to talk about how you are feeling, share any concerns and ask any questions.

- + Medication is often discussed during your meeting. Feel free to ask questions about your medication, why that medication has been prescribed and any potential side effects. Written information can be provided on request.
- + You can request support from the peer worker before, during or after your meeting with the psychiatrist (pending availability).
- + Talk about your options. If you disagree with decisions being made, ask for possible alternatives.
- + It may be helpful to write down any concerns or questions you would like to ask beforehand. On the next page is a list of questions you may like to ask during your meeting.
- + If you have questions or require further explanation following your meeting, staff are happy to sit and talk with you.



## Making a Care Plan

A Care Plan outlines your care needs and the support you would like to receive whilst you are in hospital. It also identifies goals you would like to work towards. We encourage you to be a part of the care planning process by talking with your nurse about your treatment and care. You can ask your nurse for a copy of your care plan.

## Completing a Consumer Wellness Plan:

You will be provided with a copy of the Consumer Wellness Plan when you come in to hospital. This is a document you can complete individually or you can ask staff for support.

This is a relapse prevention tool to help you identify strengths, supports, ways of managing symptoms and early warning signs. It may assist in preventing you becoming unwell in the future and can help minimise hospital stays.

You may wish to share this plan with staff, family or others so that they can continue to support you in your recovery.



# MEETING NOTES

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **PSYCHIATRIST:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PEOPLE IN MY MEETING:** \_\_\_\_\_

**+ DIAGNOSIS:** Has a diagnosis been made? Can you explain what this means?

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**+ MEDICATION:** What medication will I be taking? How much and will this change? How does the medication work? Can I have additional printed information on this medication?

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**+ LEGAL STATUS:** Am I voluntary or involuntary? Can you explain what this means?

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**+ LEAVE:** Will I be able to have leave? Will this be escorted or unescorted? If escorted is this with family or staff?

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**+ DISCHARGE:** What will be my plan for going home? What supports are available? Who will be included in follow up care when I leave hospital?

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# KEEPING BUSY DURING YOUR STAY

**We have a number of suggestions to help keep you occupied during your stay. Distraction can also be a way of coping when you are feeling distressed, bored or experiencing negative or upsetting thoughts.**

## **Groups**

Staff run a program of recovery focused activities and groups. These include various recovery and wellness sessions, relaxation, recreational activities, exercise groups and the opportunity for creative expression. Let us know if you have any activity suggestions so we can try and accommodate these. The group schedule is located in the activities room.

## **Sensory Items**

We have a number of sensory items that can be accessed including weighted vests and blankets, essential oils and diffusers, projectors, and tactile items. Sensory relaxation and meditation groups are run regularly. If you would like to explore the sensory items or learn more about how to use them please speak to the occupational therapist or diversional therapist.

## **Exercise**

The exercise physiologist runs groups throughout the week and also helps facilitate group walks for those that have leave approved by their psychiatrist. The exercise physiologist can assist you in working out an exercise program that suits your needs, abilities and motivation level.

## **iPads**

A limited number of iPads are available for you to use during your stay. We ask people to be considerate of time spent on the iPad as there may be others waiting to use it. It is important that the privacy and confidentiality of yourself and other consumers is protected therefore the iPads are not to be used to log in to personal accounts, access social media or take photos.





Get creative with some painting



Join a group



Listen to music on Spotify or Youtube



Work on your Consumer Wellness Plan



Browse the library trolley in the activities room



Follow the stretching routine displayed outside the activities room



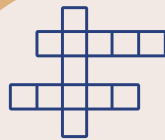
Use some sensory tools



Little Book of Wellness (ask the Allied Health staff for your copy)



Call someone for a chat. The phone is available 9am to 9pm



Focus your mind on some brain games



Play a musical instrument in the activities room



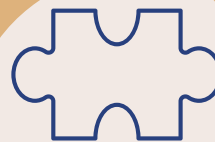
Meditate using an iPad app



Give us your feedback - complete a YES Survey



Work out on the exercise equipment



Work on a puzzle



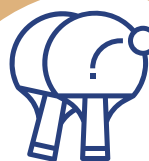
TV is available to watch 6am until 10.30pm



Work on some colouring in



Play a game on the PlayStation



Invite someone for a game of table tennis



Play a game of cards



Invite someone to play a board game



Journal to express your thoughts



Vending machines are available for snacks.



Talk to a staff member

# HAVE YOUR SAY

If you have feedback, suggestions, concerns or complaints there are a number of ways to let people know



## TALK TO THE TEAM

You are encouraged to speak to staff in the first instance, as it may be something that can be resolved quite quickly. If you are not satisfied with your treatment or you have concerns about the running of the unit and you would like to make a complaint please see staff who can provide you with information about the complaints process.

If your family have concerns about the progress of your treatment, and they feel these are not being addressed by hospital staff, there is a process around escalating these concerns through making a REACH call (see nursing staff for more details).



## OFFICIAL VISITORS PROGRAM

The vision of the Official Visitors Program (OVP) is to ensure mental health treatment and care is always given in a humane and dignified way. They are appointed by, and report to, the Minister for Mental Health and are independent of the hospital and NSW Health. All information is treated confidentially.

You can speak to the Official Visitors:

- To assist you to talk to staff (psychiatrist, nurses, allied health, peer worker)
- To assist you to make requests and have your voice heard
- About your rights
- About any concerns you may have regarding your mental health treatment
- To share any suggestion, comments or compliments

How can I talk to an Official Visitor?

**Call:** 1800 208 218

**Email:** [officialvisitorsprogram@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:officialvisitorsprogram@health.nsw.gov.au)

**Write:** Leave a comment in the secure OVP mailbox in the dining room

**In person:** You can talk with an Official Visitor during their monthly visit. Let your nurse know so they can advise when their next visit is scheduled.



## YOUR EXPERIENCE OF SERVICE (YES) SURVEY

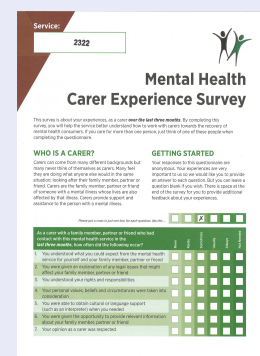
Throughout your stay a staff member will provide you with a survey. The Your Experience of Service (YES) questionnaire will be used to gather feedback, which helps identify what we are doing well and where we can improve.



## CARER EXPERIENCE OF SERVICE (CES) SURVEY

If you are a family member, friend or carer, please complete a CES survey. The survey will provide feedback about the way carers are supported by our service, identify where we do things well and where improvements can be made.

The survey asks for responses about the carer's own experience and recognises the unique perspectives carers bring to the care of the person they are supporting. The survey can be completed more than once



All information collated from the **YES** and **CES** surveys is anonymous.

Staff can assist with the completion and return of the surveys. Alternatively, you can post your feedback using the self-addressed envelope supplied.

**YES** and **CES** can also be completed online at [www.youexperience.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.youexperience.health.nsw.gov.au) using the Service Code **2322**

# LEAVING HOSPITAL



## WHEN DO I GO HOME?

How long you stay is dependent on many factors. This may include how long it takes you to get well, length of treatment and your home situation. You and those who support you will be included in discussions about your treatment and the steps that need to happen before you go home. This may include organising services and supports in the community.

Leaving hospital is often referred to as being 'discharged'.

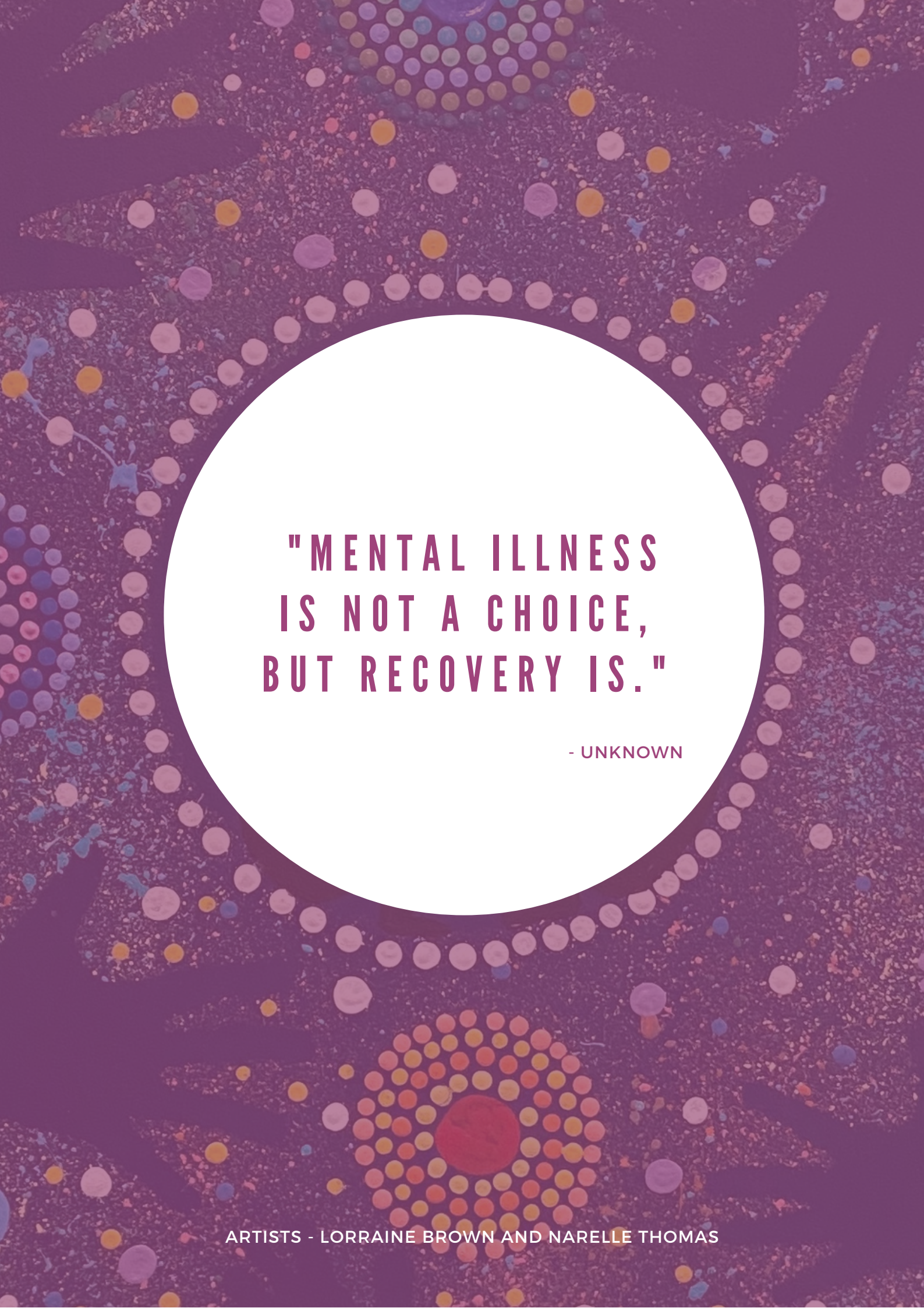
## WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I GO HOME?

The hospital will provide you with 3 days of your medication. It is important that you make an appointment with your GP for further prescriptions.

A community mental health worker will contact you within two days of discharge to see how you are feeling and to discuss any concerns you may have. A discharge summary will be forwarded to all the people identified as being involved in your continued care including your psychiatrist, community mental health staff and GP. If you identify as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person you can request an Aboriginal Mental Health Worker through Community Mental Health within the Illawarra or Nowra.

## DISCHARGE CHECKLIST

- Have you got a safe place to go to when you leave hospital?
- Do you have any concerns about returning home?
- Have you received information about support services? Have referrals been completed?
- Have you made an appointment to see your GP for follow up medication prescriptions?
- Have you received enough information about your medication and when to take it?
- Do you have the details for any follow up appointments that have been arranged for you?
- Have you completed a YES Survey to give your feedback?
- Have you let your support network know that you are leaving hospital?  
Can they assist you with practical things like transport home and groceries?



**"MENTAL ILLNESS  
IS NOT A CHOICE,  
BUT RECOVERY IS."**

- UNKNOWN

ARTISTS - LORRAINE BROWN AND NARELLE THOMAS

# RECOVERY

MAGAZINE


This magazine was designed, developed and produced by members of The Wollongong Hospital Adult Mental Health Unit team in consultation with consumers and their families.

The leads in the development of this magazine were  
Alicia Forlano - Peer Worker  
Francesca Wong - Occupational Therapist  
Shannon Sladen - Diversional Therapist

Should you wish to reproduce, amend or use this magazine outside of the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District email [ISLHD-Communications@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:ISLHD-Communications@health.nsw.gov.au)

Cover Photo - Illawarra Coastline by Angel Linares Garcia





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ONE AND DONE.  
IT IS A LIFELONG  
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