



BC MENTAL HEALTH ACT INFOBITS

Monthly MHA news, tips and resources



PATIENT-CENTERED COMMUNICATIONS DURING INVOLUNTARY ADMISSION

What if you or your loved one is in need of important information from a person with a perceived authority, but they are speaking to you in a language you cannot understand? This issue delves into how the involuntary admission criteria can be documented on medical certificates in a way that may be easier for the patient to understand.

****This Infobit discusses completing the medical certificate and does not replace Island Health policy for clinical documentation standards (16.1.3P)**

HIGHLIGHT

In the Medical Certificate, the Assessor must document explicitly how the patient meets all four of the involuntary admission criteria, meeting the six indicators below:

EXAMPLES OF PATIENT-CENTERED LANGUAGE

Assessments, medical opinions and treatment descriptions should be presented in plain language and in a way that is easy for patients and their families to understand.

- Diagnosis or general syndrome is present. (when the specific diagnosis is not clear, a recognizable psychiatric syndrome is sufficient)

- "Known diagnosis (of a condition)"; "Recorded history (of syndrome/ behaviour)", etc.
- Shows signs of depression
- Complains of symptoms similar to severe anxiety

- Description of symptoms or behaviours

- Severe anxiety - very fearful, worried
- Profound weight loss - lost 30lbs in 2 weeks
- Marked self-neglect - hasn't been bathing, no personal hygiene
- Serious aggression - pushy, dangerous, gets worse fast
- Irresistible urge (to exhibit behaviour) - cannot stop to...
- Audible hallucinations - hears voices no one else hears
- Irrational - (e.g.) believes brain has been replaced by government-controlled synthetic device

- Impact of symptoms or behaviours
- Nature & description of risk to self or others

Impact: what's already happened;
Risk: what we foresee will happen without intervention

- Has been/ at risk of being evicted from shelter because of behavior
- Has been refusing oral/ states will refuse scheduled injection of psychiatric medication
- Has been getting into altercations with strangers
- Has history of criminal assault with previous episodes of mental illness

- Reasons for the involuntary admission
- Reasons why patient is not suitable as a voluntary patient

- Clinical needs of the patient cannot be met in the community
- Patient is at risk of leaving and not accessing help
- States will carry out their plan to end their life as soon as they're gone

PRACTICE SUPPORT TOOLS & RESOURCES

- [CDC Plain Language Thesaurus](#)
- [Plain Language Tools & Resources](#) (Health Quality Ontario)

- Have BC MHA-related questions? Have an idea for a future newsletter topic? Reach out to: MHASupport@islandhealth.ca
- Resources, practice support tools & past INFOBITS issues - [click here](#)

MHA Resource Team