



CHIEF PSYCHIATRIST
of Western Australia

Approved Electroconvulsive Therapy Sites: COVID-19 Response

The Chief Psychiatrist as per the *Mental Health Act 2014*(s.544) is responsible for approving a mental health service at which electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) can be performed. In response to the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic, the Chief Psychiatrist understands there may be a requirement to investigate alternate sites for ECT provision to maintain appropriate infection control and to manage resources.

The Chief Psychiatrist's position during this period is:

- ECT must be administered in accordance with the Mental Health Act 2014
- Only sites approved PROSPECTIVELY BY THE CHIEF PSYCHIATRIST may deliver ECT legally in Western Australia
- If there is a potential change to an ECT location within a hospital site that was not part of the existing ECT approval process, the service must contact the Chief Psychiatrist before any ECT is delivered there- gazettal may not necessarily be required
- If there is a request for the approval of an ECT service at a hospital that is not currently approved for ECT, this would require gazettal if approved by the Chief Psychiatrist
- Services are required to follow all policies and procedures that constitute an Approved ECT Suite ensuring safe and therapeutic, high quality treatment to patients
- Should an Approved ECT Suite/Theatre require temporary relocation within the site for the duration of the pandemic, the policies and procedures should predominantly remain unchanged
- The service must ensure ECT reporting requirements are maintained
- Ongoing credentialing must be maintained and recorded
- If the appropriate conditions are met, ECT can be supervised remotely by an appropriately accredited supervisor
- Patient and carers are to be continually updated on any changes to ECT treatments

- The Office of the Chief Psychiatrist will promptly assist services to clarify approval status during this pandemic period
- Enquiries can be directed to the Authorisations and Approval Officer through *reception@ocp.wa.gov.au* or telephone 6553 0000
- Should a significant statewide resource issue become apparent regarding access to ECT related to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Chief Psychiatrist will take appropriate steps, within the statute of the MHA 2014, to ensure continuity of availability of ECT in Western Australia

Dr Nathan Gibson

Chief Psychiatrist Western Australia

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Leadership – Integrity - Respect – Accountability - Commitment