

THE PSYCHIATRIC PATIENT ADVOCATE OFFICE



The Psychiatric Patient Advocate Office (PPAO) is part of Ontario's Ministry of Health. It was established in 1983 to protect the rights of patients in psychiatric facilities. We ensure the voice of the patient is promoted and their rights are protected. We provide rights advice, education, and advocacy services to persons in designated mental health care facilities in Ontario.

All PPAO services are confidential and are independent from the hospitals.

RIGHTS ADVICE

Rights Advisers visit a patient after a doctor signs a form under the *Mental Health Act* and notifies the patient that their legal status has changed. The Rights Adviser explains what the form means and what impact it will have on the patient's rights. The patient can disagree with the form and ask for a review of the doctor's decision. In this case, the Rights Adviser will help with the application to the Consent and Capacity Board, an independent tribunal. On the patient's instruction, the Rights Adviser will also find a lawyer to represent the person at the hearing and help with an application for legal aid, if needed.

Rights advice must be offered to anyone who is put on certain forms under the Mental Health Act or Health Care Consent Act, however, the patient can refuse rights advice. Examples of situations that require a Rights Adviser's visit include when:

- A person is an **involuntary patient** for two weeks or more. Involuntary patients cannot leave the hospital without the doctor's permission. (Forms 3, 4 or 4a)
- A person is **incapable of consenting to treatment**. Someone else, usually a close relative, makes treatment decisions for the person. They are called the person's substitute decision-maker (SDM). (Form 33)
- A person is **incapable of managing their property**. Someone else handles the person's finances while the person is in hospital (Form 21) and/or after discharge (Form 24).
- A person is incapable of consenting to use, collection or disclosure of their **personal health information**. (Form 33)
- A doctor plans to issue or renew a **community treatment order (CTO)**. A person on a CTO must do certain things while not in a hospital, like taking medication or attending appointments. (Form 49)

ADVOCACY SERVICES

The PPAO Advocates provide information so patients can:

- make informed decisions
- maintain responsibility for their own wellness and recovery
- be involved in all decisions which affect their care, life and treatment

The PPAO provides advocacy in nine psychiatric facilities in Ontario. Patients in these facilities may contact an advocate for support if they have concerns about their rights in relation to their care, treatment, or quality of life. PPAO advocates listen to the client and based on their instructions provide help with system navigation, resolve concerns, and negotiate with hospital staff. Advocates may also refer patients to outside community agencies and resources.

EDUCATION

The PPAO educates the public, clients and their families, health care providers, social service agencies and other stakeholders about patients' rights. We offer free presentations and workshops on request and our intake department provides general information.

If you would like to arrange a presentation, please contact our head office by email or phone.

CONTACT THE PPAO

Head office:

5700 Yonge Street, 5th Floor, Toronto, Ontario M4M 2K5
Telephone: 1-800-578-2343 (toll free) / (416) 327-7000 (Toronto)
Fax: (416) 327-7008
E-mail: ppao.moh@ontario.ca Website: ontario.ca/PPAO



Nine specialty psychiatric facilities where you can contact PPAO advocates:

The Royal, Brockville (613) 345-1461 ext. 2530	St. Joseph's Healthcare, Hamilton (905) 522-1155 ext. 35514	Providence Care Hospital, Kingston (613) 544-4900 ext. 53081
Parkwood Institute, London (519) 455-5110 ext. 47267	Waypoint Centre for Mental Health, Penetanguishene (705) 549-3181 ext. 2385/2389	Southwest Centre for Forensic Mental Health Care, St. Thomas (519) 631-8510 ext. 49451
St. Joseph's Health Care Group, Thunder Bay (807) 343-2431 ext. 4386	Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, Toronto (416) 535-8501 ext. 33149/33199	Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Sciences, Whitby (905) 668-5881 ext. 6812