



ACT
Government

**Canberra Health
Services**

Mr Mark Jay
Organiser
Health Services Union
Via email: mark.jay@hsu.asn.au

Dear Mark

**MANAGEMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH BEDS IN A GENERAL HOSPITAL ENVIRONMENT –
MENTAL HEALTH, JUSTICE HEALTH AND ALCOHOL & DRUG SERVICES (MHJHADS)**

In accordance with Section G1 of the *ACT Public Sector Support Services Enterprise Agreement 2018-2021* where there are proposals by the ACT Public Service to introduce change within a Division, the head of service will consult with the affected employees and relevant unions.

Current controls for increased mental health bed demand is to utilise general hospital beds on wards 7B and 4A, which are regularly exhausted for extended periods of time. Concurrently, there is significant demand for inpatient mental health beds for patients, resulting in minimal to no capacity for direct admissions which result in situations where access to inpatient mental health beds is predominantly via the Emergency Department (ED). This results in sustained increased ED presentations and consumers experiencing an extended length of stay.

It is proposed the location for mental health surge beds is to be in the current Emergency Medicine Unit (EMU) within the ED footprint in substitution for other previously used locations such as 7B and 4A. The attached document, Attachment A, explains the nature of the proposal as well as the consultation process.

The existing guidance document '*Management of mental health beds in a general hospital environment*', Attachment B, has been reviewed and it is proposed that this be endorsed to support the ongoing management and clinical governance of the mental health inpatient surge beds.

To allow staff and unions an opportunity to consider any impact of this proposal, the consultation period will begin on Friday, 22 January 2021 until close of business Friday, 5 February 2021.

If you have any further questions or wish to provide feedback regarding the proposed change, please contact me via email to CHS.EDMHJHADS@act.gov.au or telephone Brittany Kent to arrange a time to discuss the proposal.

Yours sincerely

Karen Grace
Executive Director
Mental Health, Justice Health and Alcohol and Drug Service
Canberra Health Services

22 January 2021