



14 April 2014

Ms Glenys Wilkinson
Chief Executive Officer
Australian Association of Social Workers
PO Box 4956
Kingston
ACT 2604

Dear Ms Wilkinson

Thank you for your letter of 23 December 2013, outlining your concerns about the new 'locked ward' policy recently issued by Qld Health. I apologise for the delay in responding to your letter.

The Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland (ADCQ) has been alerted to the concerns that many stakeholders have with the policy, particularly a concern that the human rights of patients may be breached in implementing the policy.

Since the ADCQ first became aware of the policy in December 2013, we have been liaising with the Queensland Mental Health Commissioner about the human rights implications arising from the policy. The Mental Health Commissioner has issued the following statement.

<http://www.qmhc.qld.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/QMHC-statement-201213.pdf>

We have also been informed that the Mental Health Commission is currently engaging a highly respected academic to undertake a literature review that will provide a better understanding of the policies, practices and physical conditions that are necessary to move towards a least restrictive environment in acute in-patient facilities. When this has been completed, consumers, families and carers as well as clinicians and other interested professionals will be invited by the Mental Health Commissioner to discuss the implications of that research for Queensland.

<http://www.qmhc.qld.gov.au/commissioner-announces-review-locked-wards/>

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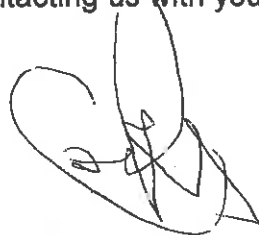
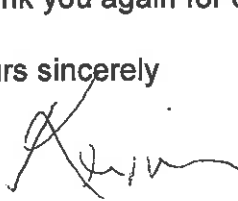
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We are supportive of the work being undertaken by the Mental Health Commissioner in relation to the issue, and will continue to liaise with her to promote an understanding, acceptance and public discussion of the human rights of patients.

Thank you again for contacting us with your concerns.

Yours sincerely



KEVIN COCKS AM
Anti-Discrimination Commissioner
Queensland