

# Your rights in compulsory care

Information to you who are under the  
age of 18 and require forensic psychiatric care



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Hello!

**My name is Rebecca. We don't know each other,  
but I've got something to tell you.**

My world fell apart when I was 15 years old. I wound up depressed, I was drinking too much alcohol and at home there were fights. I was only 15, but it got so bad that I wished I were dead.

One morning, the police took me away to compulsory care. I guess a lot of people thought I was hopeless, I thought I was too. I didn't trust adults.

I don't know what you've been through. But it's OK to feel like you've gone off track, lost everything, to cry and to be angry. The pain will pass, it's not the end of the world. There are trustworthy adults all around you.

Don't let a situation, an illness or a person make you give up hope. Life is full of surprises, and one day you will be so proud of yourself for getting through this.

Feel your wrist – feel your pulse. That's life inside of you!

You are important, valuable, strong, courageous and unique. The world needs you, and I believe in you!

Hugs, Rebecca

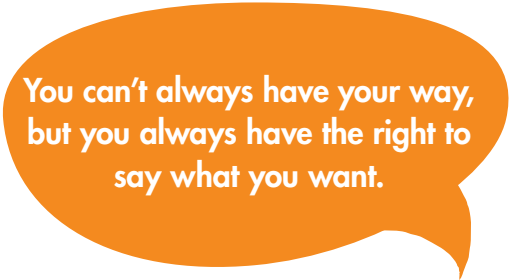
Author and lecturer



# You have the right to good care

Healthcare must be safe and secure for you and everyone else.

Staff must have the right training and medical experience. They must also take into account what is best for you when you receive care.



You can't always have your way, but you always have the right to say what you want.

## **When can you be placed in compulsory forensic care?**

Normally, no one can give you healthcare against your will. However, you may be committed to compulsory psychiatric care if you fulfil the requirements of the Forensic Psychiatric Care Act (LRV).

The requirements that must be met are:

- You have a serious mental disorder.
- You require 24 hours a day psychiatric care.
- You have refused the healthcare you require.

If you have been sentenced to forensic psychiatric care, your sentence plus the first two requirements are enough to commit you to compulsory care.

# Compulsory care under LRV

Receiving compulsory care under LRV means that a doctor or court has decided that you shall be committed to compulsory care under the provisions of the Forensic Psychiatric Care Act. Who decides on compulsory care, and when compulsory care ends, depends on your situation.

## **Institutional care of young persons, arrested or detained**

When a doctor assesses whether you need compulsory care, he or she will examine you, describe your symptoms, explain why you need care against your will and write a care certificate regarding your need for compulsory psychiatric care.

But before you are placed in compulsory care, another doctor must examine you and decide that this is what is needed.

When does compulsory care end?

If any of the requirements for compulsory care no longer applies, you will no longer be placed in compulsory care.

If you are **sentenced to institutional care of young persons**, compulsory care must end at the latest when that decision is no longer valid.

If you are **arrested or detained**, compulsory care must end at the latest when you are released.

## **Sentenced to forensic psychiatric care**

If you are sentenced to forensic psychiatric care, your care starts as inpatient care. In some cases, your care can become outpatient forensic psychiatric care later on.

This means that you don't need to be in the hospital 24 hours a day, but you must follow certain rules. You may have to take a certain medication or attend therapy.

When does compulsory care end?

A first-time sentence of forensic psychiatric care is valid for a maximum of four months.

If you are sentenced **without a special discharge review**, the doctor must continuously assess whether the two requirements for compulsory care apply to you. If they do not apply, you shall no longer be placed in compulsory care.

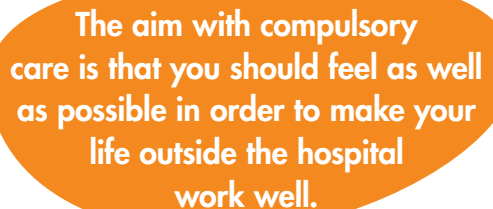
If you are sentenced with a **special discharge review**, the court assesses whether or not you will remain in compulsory care.

If, after four months, the court decides that compulsory care shall continue, it remains in force for another six months. There is no limit to how long the court can extend care.

## You must have a care plan

Staff must make a plan for your care as soon as possible.

The care plan must describe what kind of care you need and how it will ensure that you no longer need compulsory care.



The aim with compulsory care is that you should feel as well as possible in order to make your life outside the hospital work well.

# You have the right to information

Staff must provide you with information you can understand and must answer your questions

You have the right to be informed about the care you receive and any plans for future care.

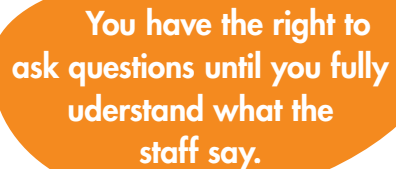
You have the right to know how you may be affected by medication, therapy and other aspects of your care.

## **Information about treatments and medication**

Staff must tell you how different treatments and medications may affect you and your body. You also have the right to be informed about any risks associated with the treatment, whether something could happen when you have taken medication for some time and what side-effects you may experience.

## **You may read what staff write**

You have the right to read your care plan. If possible, staff will prepare the care plan together with you. You also have the right to read your medical records. However, if the doctor believes that reading something in the medical record might worsen your health condition or care quality, that information can be kept secret from you.



**You have the right to ask questions until you fully understand what the staff say.**



# Who receives information about you?

As a rule, parents receive information about your health and other personal information. However, your age and maturity determine whether they have the right to receive information. If sharing certain information with your parents could negatively impact your health, it can be kept secret..

## **Healthcare is governed by confidentiality**

Confidentiality means that staff cannot speak about your health or other personal information. However, they may share information about you with a hospital or social services if this is necessary to provide you with the care, treatment or support you need.

## **Staff must report if you are being harmed**

If staff suspect or learn that you are being harmed or are at risk of being harmed, they must immediately report this to social services. They may do so if they suspect that you have been subjected to violence, or if they think your parents are not able to properly care for you. It may feel tough that staff make such a report, but they are legally obliged to do so.

When such a report comes to the social services, they will determine whether you need their support and help. You have the right to be informed and to say what you think.

# You have the right to a support person

A support person is an adult who comes from outside to support you in compulsory care and for a month afterwards.

The support person helps you with personal matters and talks to you and spends time with you.

**A support person is your support, not staff's or your parents'.**

## **Rules for support persons**

Your support person may visit you regularly, but sometimes the schedule and routines of the ward may dictate these visits. In addition to visits, this person can, for example, attend meetings about your care and provide support in administrative court hearings.

The support person has an obligation of confidentiality regarding your health and other personal information. This means that he or she can only share such information with others in exceptional cases.

## **How to get a support person**

Staff must ask whether you want a support person as soon as you feel well enough to absorb this information.

A support person is appointed for you by a patient committee.

If you already have a contact person through social services, that person can be your support person. If you wish to change your support person or have a complaint, you can speak with health care staff or a patient committee.



# Certain rights may be restricted

When you are cared for in inpatient forensic care, certain rights may be restricted.

## **Telephone, computer and mail**

Usually, you have the right to stay in touch with your parents, guardians, relatives and friends. Therefore, you can contact anyone you wish during your hospital stay. Staff may not intercept your phone calls or read what you write.



In exceptional cases, you may be banned from calling or using the computer. This may be because the contacts make you feel worse or make it more difficult to give you care. As soon as the grounds for your phone or computer ban disappear, you have the right to use it again.

You always have the right to send letters to a lawyer, public counsel or a public authority and to receive mail without staff reading it. However, staff may need to check that mail addressed to you does not contain alcohol, drugs or anything else that might harm you or disrupt the work of the hospital. If staff find such items, they may be confiscated.



## Ward with security-class 1 or 2

If you are arrested, detained or sentenced to compulsory treatment with special discharge review, and you are in a ward with security-class 1 or 2, you can only use the computer or phone provided by the hospital. During this time, staff can confiscate your computer or phone.

## **Staff may check your belongings**

If the doctor considers it necessary, staff may check that you do not have items that you may not have. That includes alcohol, drugs or anything else that could harm you or another.

During a check, staff may search your clothes and your bag. They may also ask you to undress so they can see your body naked. Staff are not permitted to touch your body.



## **Visit**

You have the right to meet persons who are important to you during your care. Your parents, siblings and friends are permitted to visit the ward during visiting hours.

In exceptional cases, your visits may be restricted. This may be because the visits make you feel worse.

## **Activities and time outdoors**

You have the right to daily activities at the place where you receive care and to be outdoors for at least one hour per day.

In exceptional cases, these rights may be restricted. This may be because the activities make you feel worse.

However, you may not leave the ward or hospital area alone, while receiving compulsory care.

To do so, you must have a doctor's permission. This is called leave.

**You always have the right to speak your mind in matters that concern you, and adults must consider this.**

*– From the Convention on the Rights of the Child*

# Coercive measures

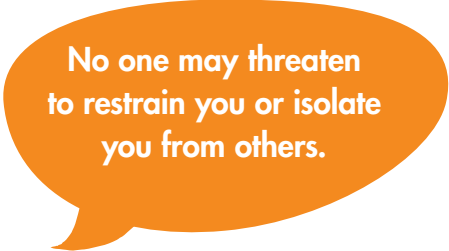
## **Only as a last resort**

In inpatient forensic psychiatric care, healthcare staff may, in exceptional cases, do things that are against your explicit will. Coercive measures may only be used when there is no other way to address an emergency situation that is dangerous for you or another.

If you have been subjected to a coercive measure, it must be recorded in your medical records.

## **Compulsory medication**

If you do not want to take medication, staff must respect that to the extent possible. However, if a doctor decides that you must take a certain medication, you can be forced to take it.



**No one may threaten to restrain you or isolate you from others.**

## **Restrain with a belt**

The doctor may decide that you must be restrained with a belt, but only when there is a great risk of self-harm and it is not possible to do it any other way.

You may never be restrained for longer than absolutely necessary.

You may be restrained for a maximum of one hour. If you need to be restrained for a longer period, a doctor must make a new decision that is valid for a maximum of one hour.

There is no limit to the number of decisions the doctor may make. But you must be released as soon as there is no longer any reason for keeping you in restraints.

Healthcare staff must be present in the room with you at all times.

### **Isolation: staying in a room**

The doctor may order that you be isolated by, e.g., locking you up or preventing you from leaving a room.

But this may be done only when there is no other way.

**Being disruptive is not enough to be placed in isolation. Your aggressive behaviour must seriously interfere with the care of others.**

You may be isolated for a maximum of two hours. If you need to be isolated for a longer period, the doctor must make a new decision that is valid for a maximum of two hours.

There is no limit to the number of decisions the doctor may make, but you must be released as soon as you no longer seriously interfere with the care of others.

Healthcare staff must check on you at regular intervals.

# You have the right to appeal

If you think that decisions made regarding your care are incorrect, you can complain to a court called the administrative court, this is called an appeal. But not all decisions can be appealed.

## **Staff must explain how to appeal**

Staff must tell you what decisions you can appeal. They will also explain what to do and how to write an appeal to the administrative court.

## **Help from public counsel**

If you appeal a decision to the administrative court, the court will help you contact public counsel. This is an adult who will help with your appeal and have contact with the court. It doesn't cost you anything to receive help from public counsel.

**All children have rights.  
This is true regardless of your skin colour,  
gender, language, nationality  
or religion.**

*– From the Convention on the  
Rights of the Child*



# If you are dissatisfied or have questions

You can always speak with healthcare staff or your doctor. They must help you, and they have the responsibility to provide you with good care.

**Feel free to contact me!**



## **Helpline for Children and Young People**

If you wish to ask about your rights, or to share something that is not working well in your care, you can contact the Helpline for Children and Young People.

The call is free and will not show up on your phone bill.

Call 020 120 06 06.

The helpline is open weekdays, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

When the helpline is closed, you can leave a message on the answering machine. You do not have to tell who you are.

# Glossary and abbreviations

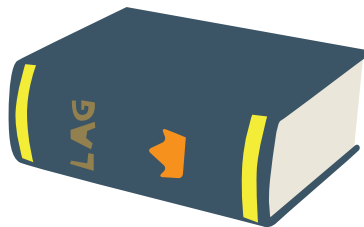
<b>Chief physician</b>	Doctor specialised in psychiatry and responsible for compulsory psychiatric care.
<b>Administrative court</b>	Court that can decide about compulsory care.
<b>Sectioning order</b>	Compulsory care decision that must exist before you can be committed to compulsory care. The doctor writing the sectioning order must be a specialist in psychiatry.
<b>Contact person</b>	A member of staff with special responsibility for contact with you.
<b>LPT</b>	The Compulsory Psychiatric Care Act
<b>LRV</b>	The Forensic Psychiatric Care Act
<b>Leave</b>	Opportunity to leave the hospital area on your own, e.g., to be at home.
<b>Inpatient compulsory care</b>	Compulsory psychiatric care at a hospital 24 hours a day.
<b>Care certificate</b>	An initial medical certificate that is required to admit you to compulsory psychiatric care. If a care certificate exists you may be detained in a hospital, against your will, before it is decided if you will be committed to compulsory care.
<b>Care plan</b>	A document describing the treatment and other things you need during your care.
<b>Outpatient compulsory care</b>	You may have to take a certain medicine or participate in treatment, but do not have to be in the hospital 24 hours a day.

The rights of the child can be found in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Convention on the Rights of the Child is Swedish law.

Rules that apply to all patients can be found in the Health and Medical Services Act (HSL), the Patient Act and the Patient Safety Act (PSL).

Specific rules for forensic mental care are set out in the Forensic Mental Care Act (LRV).

Rules on confidentiality can be found in the Public Access to Information and Secrecy Act (OSL).



This informational pamphlet is designed in accordance with the laws and regulations applicable to forensic mental care. In order to make the information easily understandable for children and young people, certain legal concepts and expressions have been reformulated.

**You always have rights, even in compulsory care.  
In this leaflet, we explain your rights and in which  
specific cases coercive measures can be used.**

**Your Rights in Compulsory Care:  
Care under the Forensic Mental Care Act**

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