



**mhc**  
coimisiún meabhair - shláinte  
mental health commission

# Information for Involuntary Patients

The impact of Covid-19 on  
the mental health tribunal  
process



**As a result of the ongoing Covid-19 public health emergency certain changes may happen to the review process for patients who are involuntarily detained. This will depend on local and national circumstances related to the pandemic at the time a patient is involuntarily detained.**

Please be assured that you will still have your mental health tribunal review and the key protections relating to the review remain in place.

**You will still have:**



a solicitor to represent you,



a second opinion from another consultant psychiatrist, and



there will still be an independent decision about your need to stay in hospital.

You will continue to receive information on your rights and information on your care.

## In summary, the changes are as follows:

1. It is possible that your solicitor may not be able to speak with you in person in the hospital. If not, he or she will speak to you either by telephone or video call before and after your mental health tribunal.
2. The independent consultant psychiatrist who meets you to discuss your case, may not meet you in the hospital. If not, he or she will do his or her review with you either by telephone or video call.
3. The mental health tribunal may not take place in person in the hospital. If not, it will take place by video conference or telephone. Your solicitor will be on that call and will represent you. If you would like to make a submission in writing to the mental health tribunal you can do so. Your solicitor will talk to you about this.
4. The decision of the mental health tribunal will be read out at the end of the review and a copy sent to the Mental Health Commission. We will immediately arrange for this decision to be sent to the mental health act administrator in the hospital and your solicitor.

For more detailed information on involuntary detention you may wish to refer to the “Know Your Rights booklet” available on our website [www.mhcirl.ie/what-we-do/mental-health-tribunals](http://www.mhcirl.ie/what-we-do/mental-health-tribunals) or you can ask for a copy at your hospital.

You can contact the Mental Health Tribunal division within the Mental Health Commission on **01 636 2400**.

**Please note:** This leaflet is only a guide to the Mental Health Acts 2001-2018 (as amended). It is not a legal interpretation of changes, so please do not rely on it for advice.