



Brad Hazzard
Minister for Health

Tanya Davies
Minister for Mental Health

MEDIA RELEASE

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REPORT INTO NSW MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM RELEASED

The NSW Government has today released the independent *Review of seclusion, restraint and observation of consumers with a mental illness in NSW Health facilities* by the state's Chief Psychiatrist, Dr Murray Wright, and a panel of five mental health experts.

Minister for Health Brad Hazzard and Minister for Mental Health Tanya Davies confirmed all 19 recommendations have been accepted, to prevent the inappropriate use of seclusion and restraint in acute mental health units and emergency departments.

"The tragic passing of Miriam Merten in Lismore was the catalyst for an independent review led by Dr Wright who reached out to health professionals, consumers and their support networks to determine what changes there should be in our mental health system," Mr Hazzard said.

"Whilst the Government will need to work with our Local Health Districts to bring about change in practices and procedures, the message from the review is loud and clear - seclusion and restraint of mental health patients should be a last resort."

The NSW Government will immediately invest \$20 million, so hospital managers can work with their staff to improve the therapeutic environment inside acute mental health units.

Mrs Davies said the NSW Government will also commence a review of the use of safe assessment rooms in emergency departments.

"This Review reinforces the vital role therapeutic and trauma informed care plays in preventing the use of seclusion and restraint. We must now ensure every member of our dedicated workforce is confident with and trained in these care models, and it is embedded in all aspects of leadership," Mrs Davies said.

"Seclusion and restraint incidents have been gradually declining since 2011 and once we begin implementing the Review's recommendations, we expect this trend to accelerate."

"This has been a difficult process for many consumers, their families, mental health workers and the review team and we would like to sincerely thank you for your honesty and courage during this process."

The NSW Ministry of Health will now develop a plan outlining how and when each of the recommendations of the Review will be implemented. This Plan will be delivered to the Ministers by March 2018. The full report can be viewed online at www.health.nsw.gov.au.

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