

# 1 Upon Arrival at a Mental Health Facility



## Provide Medical Staff with the history and symptoms of your loved one.

As required under the state law, California Welfare & Institutions Code Section (W&I) 5008.2, health care providers MUST accept and use the information you provide pertaining to the history and the symptoms of the patient. This law mandates that hospital personnel must consider all the relevant information about the historical course of the person's illness to evaluate whether the individual is a danger to self, a danger to others, or is gravely disabled. Please provide the information in a short well-presented written format. For assistance call NAMI Los Angeles County Council at 213-386-3615 to reach your local NAMI affiliate or go to [www.namilacc.org](http://www.namilacc.org) for more resources.



## Request your loved one sign a "Release of Information" form so staff can discuss their condition with you.

A patient must sign a "Release of Information" (ROI) form in order for the doctor/hospital staff to discuss your loved one's case with you. If the patient does not sign the "Release of Information" form, the hospital personnel cannot have a dialogue with you about your loved one, but they still must accept your information regarding the patient's history and symptoms. Knowledge of the historical course and symptoms of one's illness is considered an important component of treatment and will provide health care providers with the essential information they need to provide the best care possible.

# 2 Ready to Go? Do not Leave Without a Discharge Plan!

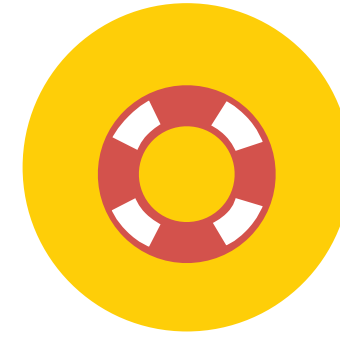
A written viable Discharge Plan for the person with mental illness must be provided to the patient's conservator, guardian, and/or the patient when the person is released from the hospital. *W&I Code commencing with sections 5622 and 5768.*



The plan must include where the patient will live upon discharge from the hospital.



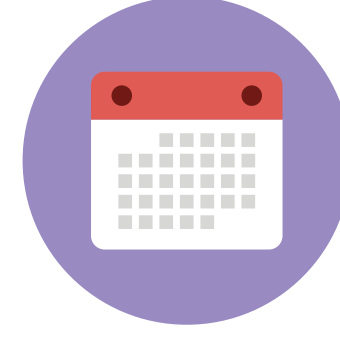
The plan should take into account the patient's level of functioning, financial resources, capacity for insight and capability to care for self.



The safety and appropriateness of the patient's return location must be verified.



If you are willing to take the responsibility for the person's food, clothing and shelter, this must be indicated in writing.



The plan should state when the patient needs to see a doctor again; indicating the pre-arranged appointment details.

*W&I Code commencing with sections: 5008, 5250, 5350.*

**For more information on your loved one's Discharge Plan, see your assigned Hospital Caseworker.**

**For any concerns with the Discharge Plan, see the Hospital Administrator or call:**

- Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health Patient Rights Advocate: 213-738-2714
- Family Advocate: 213-738-3948 • Adult System of Care: 213-738-2868

# 3 Gravely Disabled & LPS Conservatorship:

## Terms to Know & Steps to Take

A person is considered gravely disabled if he/she is unable, because of their mental illness, to safely provide for his/her basic needs of food or clothing or shelter.



**EXAMPLES:** A person's health is at risk because of not eating due to delusions or paranoia of food, or they are not able to get food — losing weight is a red flag; or a person takes their clothes off at inappropriate times and places, which may also be a health risk or legal issue; or a person has no place to live safely with those who will support his/her recovery; or when the family refuses to have a person live at home unless they are under the LPS Conservatorship AND have gone through mental health treatment in order to stabilize.

*Please note:* If someone is willing to provide for the patient's food, clothing and shelter safely, then they will not be considered gravely disabled. *W&I Code commencing with sections 5008, 5250, 5350.*



## Involuntary California Treatment Law: LPS Conservatorship

- LPS Conservatorship is the California term used for involuntary mental health treatment for people who are both "gravely disabled" and have a serious mental illness such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, schizoaffective disorder, compulsive disorder, clinical depression, or chronic substance abuse if in conjunction with a primary mental health disorder. *W&I Code commencing with sections 5008, 5250, 5350.*
- LPS Conservatorship facilitates recovery by the assignment of a substitute decision-maker (the Conservator) who has the legal authority for oversight to ensure proper mental health treatment and treatment compliance for the person with the mental illness (the Conservatee).
- Under the LPS Conservatorship, the patient can no longer refuse treatment. This provides and advances the path for successful recovery for individuals who are non-compliant with treatment and medications and/or have no insight into their illness. *W&I Code commencing with 5350.*
- The CA Welfare and Institutions Code 5358.5 is the law that gives a Conservator the ability to place a person with mental illness (Conservatee) into treatment when the conservator deems it necessary for the person's recovery.
- A written viable Discharge Plan for the person with mental illness must be provided to their Conservator when the person is released from the hospital.

# 4 Ways to Support Your Loved One

Forms to signs, terms to learn & things to know as the patient moves through treatment



## You're Not Alone! Help & Resources for Friends & Family

### NAMI offers:

- Free educational classes, "Family to Family", to empower and educate families in their understanding of mental illness.
- Free "Peer to Peer" classes for people with a serious mental illness who are working on their recovery.
- Free support groups for families and friends dealing with a person who has a mental illness.
- Mentorship and support in moving through the LPS Conservatorship process.

Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health Full Service Partnerships provides a wide array of services and support to help individuals with recovery and wellness.

**For information call: 213-351-7737**

NAMI, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, is a grass roots support organization of families and individuals whose lives have been affected by serious mental illness.

**NAMI Helpline:**  
800-950-NAMI  
[www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org)



**Call us! 213-386-3615 Or visit us at [www.namilacc.org](http://www.namilacc.org)**