

Core and Specialist Skills Assessment

AREA 7: Practice Area – Acute Mental Health Inpatient Unit

Scope and Objectives

This Core and Specialist Assessment (CSAt) will enable the allied health professional to:

- Build on their knowledge and skills within an *Acute Mental Health Inpatient Unit*. This includes understanding their professional role within an inpatient unit, whilst also building on core skills of mental health allied health practitioner service to this consumer group.
- Develop a sound understanding of inpatient care and the opportunities and challenges in providing this service to consumers, significant others, families and carers.
- Develop a sound understanding of inpatient service delivery including mental health and discipline specific assessment, therapeutic groups, community referrals and discharge pathways.

This CSAt outlines the core practice skills and considerations for graduates working in acute mental health inpatient service.

This CSAt should be used in conjunction with professional supervision and the Allied Health MHAOD New Graduate Program Framework. The framework and associated resources are available at: <https://qheps.health.qld.gov.au/allied-health/mental-health>

Version:	1	Author:	Office of the Chief Allied Health Officer
Document	Allied Health Director MHAOD	Review	June 2028
custodian:	Office of the Chief Allied Health Officer	date:	
Acknowledgements:	West Moreton Hospital and Health Service Allied Health Graduate Program in Mental Health		

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Published by the State of Queensland (Queensland Health), June 2026



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An electronic version of this document is available at <https://qheps.health.qld.gov.au/allied-health/mental-health>

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Requisite training, knowledge, skills and experience

Training opportunities

- Training as outlined in the New Graduate Framework “Graduate Training Schedule and Record”.
- [Australian Mental Health Outcomes and Classification Network \(AMHOCN\)](#) training.
- Internal linkage opportunities within the HHS:
 - Senior or advanced clinical roles of each profession within the team.
 - Connect with the acute teams and roles within the HHS such as Acute Care Team (ACT), Drug and Alcohol Brief Intervention Team (DABIT), Hospital in the Home (HitH), Step Up Step Down (SUSD), as well as specialised roles including Way Back Clinical Care Coordinator roles, Suicide Prevention roles, and Tackling Regional Adversity through Connected Communities (TRACC) roles (where available).
 - Connect with community teams and roles within the HHS such as Continuing Care Teams (CCT), Community Care Unit (CCU), Mobile Intensive Rehabilitation Team (MIRT), Older Persons Mental Health (OPMH) team (where available).
- External linkage opportunities:
 - Other government agency linkages may include National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), Department of Housing and Public Works, Queensland Public Trustee, Office of the Public Guardian, Services Australia (Centrelink), Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety.
 - Local community supports, social infrastructure and organisations which offer sustainable community connections. These might include:
 - Common support pathways including NDIS support services, carer supports.
 - Community centres and Non-Government Organisations (NGO's) which offer groups, activities and psychosocial supports.
 - Crisis support services such as charity or religious services who provide emergency relief, food vouchers etc.
 - Council facilities and activities such as libraries, pools, groups.
- Graduate Reflective Learning Sessions or peer learning groups and supervision.

Clinical knowledge/evidence

The following are examples of demonstrating content knowledge by an allied health professional:

- Demonstrates an understanding of the variety of consumer presentations encountered by an inpatient service, balancing risk and recovery considerations, including prevalent diagnoses, levels of complexity and risk, and the treatment and referral pathways for care within an inpatient setting.
- Recognises deteriorating mental state and/or escalating risk and discusses plans to support a consumer, significant other, family and carers with senior clinicians and/or medical staff as per local clinical governance processes.
- Links consumers with:
 - General Practitioner (GP) and other healthcare providers, encouraging development of a GP Mental Health Care Plan and regular monitoring of physical and mental health.
 - Other community-based support providers which may include support to navigate and access and appropriate sharing of relevant clinical information.
- Provides discipline specific assessment, intervention and advice supporting inpatient care planning and discharge planning.
- Facilitates therapeutic group interventions as part of the inpatient unit therapeutic group program.
- Utilises outcome measures (HONOS, LSP, MHI) as a therapeutic engagement tool encouraging the consumer to reflect on their health and wellbeing through comparing results over time.

References and supporting documents

National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards (second edition) alignment



1. Clinical Governance Standard



2. Partnering with Consumers Standard



4. Medication Safety Standard



5. Comprehensive Care Standard



6. Communicating for Safety Standard



8. Recognising and responding to Acute Deterioration Standard

National

- Australian Mental Health Outcomes and Classification Network (AMHOCN).

Queensland

- Clinical guidelines, policies and resources developed by the Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drugs Branch (the Branch) supports the statewide development, delivery and enhancement of safe, quality, evidence-based clinical and non-clinical services in the specialist areas of mental health and alcohol and other drugs treatment. Key documents include:
 - [Comprehensive Care - Partnerships in Care and Communication](#). (2020).
 - [Co-occurring substance use disorders and other mental health disorders: policy position statement for Mental Health Alcohol and Other Drugs Service](#). (2021).
 - [Seclusion and restraint](#) policies, factsheets, forms and resources.
 - [Strengthening the state funded mental health alcohol and other drugs \(MHAOD\) service response for people from culturally and linguistically diverse \(CALD\) communities](#). (2023).
 - [Supporting Metabolic Health for Queenslanders living with Serious Mental Illness and/or Substance Use Disorders](#). (2023).
- Additional resources available via [Insight](#), Queensland Health.

Assessment: performance criteria

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Name:

Position:

Work Unit:

	Assessment criteria	Applicable (Y/N)	Date achieved	Assessor initial
1	Completes assessment of mental state and risk as part of discipline specific assessment, and intervention in line with the HHS policy and procedures with a person in acute distress.			
2	Demonstrates an understanding of the role of graduate's profession within an inpatient unit including their scope of practice, assessments, professional formulation and treatments provided including therapeutic group facilitation.			
3	Develops a therapeutic relationship (inclusive of trust, rapport and positive communication skills) with the person, their significant other, family or carers, giving consideration to perception of hospitals and expectations of care.			
4	Demonstrates an understanding of how to effectively work with significant other, family or carers considering factors including competing demands and priorities, health literacy, healthcare trauma, family structures and dynamics.			
5	Demonstrates an understanding of key considerations for persons during an inpatient admission including discharge and support coordination, capacity and consent, health literacy, interventions and strategies to support reduction of seclusion and restraint, impact of substance use on presentation.			
6	Explains risk considerations for working with a person in an inpatient setting. Examples may include seclusion and restraint, occupational violence prevention (OVP), impaired capacity and vulnerability, recognising and responding to a deteriorating person (RRDP).			
7	Completes consistent, high quality clinical documentation relevant to inpatient care settings in alignment with the MHAOD comprehensive care resource guide e.g. discipline specific assessment, care review summary.			
8	Demonstrates the ability to identify risks or RRDP such as recognising early warning signs and symptoms of deterioration while an inpatient and implements agreed management strategies as per their recovery and care plans.			
9	Provides a range of individual and therapeutic group psychoeducation sessions for core diagnoses and clinically significant outcomes e.g. sleep hygiene, relaxation/mindfulness, distress tolerance.			
10	Demonstrates sound knowledge of other service providers and non-government organisations that work with AMHIUs to deliver a seamless/integrated service to consumers.			
11	Demonstrates a sound understanding of the local process required when supporting an acutely unwell person which may include: • develop safety plans that balance identified risks, safety and recovery philosophies; • increasing support intensity (visual observations); • admission to high dependency unit (HDU); • use of seclusion and restraint.			
12	Demonstrates a sound understanding of the local process required when supporting a person's community discharge support options: • health care supports including GP, private psychology and NGO supports; • public health supports step-down supports (e.g. Hospital in the Home (HiH), Step Up Step Down (SUSD)); or • community-based treating teams e.g. Community Care Unit (CCU), Continuing Care Team (CCT), Older Persons Mental Health (OPMH) team.			
13	Demonstrates an understanding of the Mental Health Act (2016) and the requirements of an allied health professional within an inpatient setting e.g. absent without approval (AWA), limited community treatment (LCT), change of category, role in seclusion.			
14	Demonstrates awareness of referral pathways with respect to community supports particularly NDIS supports including Supported Independent Living (SIL) and completes relevant profession specific assessments/reports to support future care planning.			
15	Demonstrates skills to support consumers with vulnerability risks such as Domestic and Family Violence (DFV), child protection, elder abuse or financial vulnerability etc			

16	Demonstrates understanding of the purpose and roles of: • Child Safety; • the Office of the Public Guardian (OPG); • the Queensland Public Trustee; And relevant legislation including: • The Child Protection Act (1999); • Child Safe Organisations Act (2024); • Public Guardian Act (2014); • Guardianship and Administration Act (2000); • The Public Trustee Act (1978).			
17	Identifies and escalates concerns about a person's mental state and/or risk as per local clinical governance processes and procedures.			

Reflective practice (mandatory)		Date achieved	Assessor initial
R1	Describe a clinical situation in which there was a significant difference of perspectives between the multidisciplinary team and own discipline specific perspective with respect to care needs prior to discharge. Reflect on the opportunities and challenges posed through navigating these differences considering discipline perspective, values and ethics.		
R2	Reflects on the professional practice learnings of completing discipline specific assessment and interventions with a person during an inpatient admission. Consider the opportunities and challenges posed by the practice setting and timing.		
R3	Consider ways in which an inpatient admission may be impacted by or create trauma for a person and practical strategies that can be used to prevent or minimise the likelihood of trauma.		

Comments:					
Record of assessment competence:					
Assessor name and signature:		Assessor position:		Competence achieved:	/ /
Assessor name and signature:		Assessor position:			
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