On 5 March 2017, emergency examination authorities under the Public Health Act 2005 will replace emergency examination orders.

Under the new authorities:

A person can be brought into an emergency department by a police or ambulance officer if:

- the person appears at immediate risk of serious harm, and
- the risk appears to be the result of major disturbance in the person’s mental capacity, and
- the person appears to require urgent examination, treatment or care.

A person can be detained for up to 6 hours for an examination to determine the nature of the person’s condition and the person’s treatment requirements.

This period can be extended by a further 6 hours by a doctor, nurse or allied health professional.

This applies whether the disturbance in the person’s mental capacity is due to illness, disability, injury, intoxication or other reason.