

GUIDANCE FOR THE COMPLETION OF SECTION PAPERS

MENTAL HEALTH ACT 1983

CODE OF PRACTICE: Chapter 13 – Receipt and scrutiny of documents

“People who sign applications and make the supporting medical recommendations must take care to comply with the requirements of the Act. People who act on the authority of these documents should also make sure that they are in the proper form, as an incorrectly completed or indecipherable form may not constitute authority for a patient’s detention”.

The Application – check list:

1. Is the patient’s name and address the same on all documents (full name no initials)?
2. Have you signed and dated the application?
3. Did you see the patient within 14 days of the application?
4. If neither doctor had previous acquaintance with the patient have you completed the paragraph saying why?
5. Is your application dated on or after the dates of the medical recommendations?
6. Is the date of admission within 14 days of the last medical examination?
7. Have you clearly deleted “*all phrases which do not apply*” ?
8. Have any corrections been initialled?

The Medical Recommendations – check list:

1. Is the patient's name and address the same on all documents?
2. Have both medical recommendations been signed? Doctors must give their full name (no initials) and their full address.
3. Are the dates of the medical examinations the same or not more than 5 clear days apart?
4. Is one of the doctors signing a recommendation S12 approved?
5. Are the dates of the medical recommendations on or before the date of the application.
6. Have "*all phrases which do not apply* been deleted"?
7. Have all corrections been initialled?
8. For S2 both medical recommendations must state why informal admission is not appropriate.
9. For S2 medical recommendations must include an opinion and evidence about WHY a person should be detained – for reasons of health? safety? protection of others?
10. For S2 – doctors must give their opinion and evidence why they think the person is suffering from a mental disorder which warrants in hospital for ASSESSMENT. This must include a description of the patient's symptoms and behaviours.
11. For S3 – medical recommendations must provide an opinion and evidence as to why the patient is said to be suffering from a mental disorder of a nature or degree which makes it appropriate for the patient to receive medical treatment IN HOSPITAL.
12. For S3 – medical recommendations must include evidence regarding risk to patients health/safety and/or risk to others.
13. For S3 – medical recommendations must give an opinion to evidence why treatment CANNOT BE PROVIDED WITHOUT S3 DETENTION and why other treatment/care is not appropriate and specifically why INFORMAL DETENTION IS NOT APPROPRIATE.
14. For S3 – medical recommendations must state the name of hospital(s) where appropriate medical treatment for that individual patient is ACTUALLY AVAILABLE.