

## Memo

**To:** All SMHS staff  
**From:** Professor Dinesh Arya, Chief Psychiatrist  
**Date Prepared:** 22 April 2024

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**Subject:** Back to back Assessment Orders

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Even though a back-to-back assessment order is not prohibited in the Mental Health Act (the Act), it is not in the spirit of the Act that this occurs. Before the expiry of an assessment order, either the person under an assessment order should be discharged or an application for a treatment order made.

The Tasmanian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (TASCAT) Mental Health Stream also released a finding on 5 April 2024 explaining why back-to-back assessment orders would not be appropriate.

It is important that a situation does not arise where the maximum duration permissible under different provisions of the Mental Health Act has expired because of administrative oversight. This risks compromising a patient's care.

I would consider such an oversight a serious incident that must be reported through the Safety Reporting and Learning System (SLRS). It will require a comprehensive review by the Service to ensure that the occurrence of such an incident can be minimised.

Kind regards



Professor Dinesh Arya  
Chief Psychiatrist  
06 May 2024