

30 October 2017

### **DHBs welcome High Court judgment**

Waitemata and Capital & Coast DHBs have welcomed the High Court judgment today focusing on the care provided to three intellectually disabled patients.

The patients are subject to compulsory treatment orders under the Intellectual Disability (Compulsory Care and Rehabilitation) Act 2003, and the Mental Health (Compulsory Assessment and Treatment) Act 1992.

The judgment dismissed a catalogue of claims by lawyers representing the men about their living conditions and highlighted the “concerted and dedicated” efforts of the DHBs to help improve the applicants’ health in order for them to move out of secure compulsory care.

Dr Jeremy Skipworth, Clinical Director of Waitemata DHB’s Mason Clinic, said the judgment highlighted the quality of the care provided and the compassionate approach of mental health staff to assist the men in their rehabilitation.

“The focus of inpatient treatment is always on rehabilitation and the court has recognised that this therapeutic outlook is in no way compromised when caring for patients with intellectual disabilities,” Dr Skipworth said.

“The fact that the health of one of the patients referred to in the judgment has progressed to the point that he has been able to move out of the inpatient environment and into community care clearly demonstrates the success of this approach.”

“The judgment is a strong endorsement of the care provided to these men and acknowledges the compassion and commitment of the specialist mental health service staff involved in the treatment of patients whose needs can at times be very challenging.”

Capital & Coast DHB Mental Health, Addictions and Intellectual Disability General Manager Nigel Fairley echoed the judgment’s comments about the dedication and compassion of the staff involved in the care of the three patients.

“Our staff are devoted and committed to caring for, and supporting, all our clients and only ever work with the client’s best interests in mind,” Mr Fairley said.

“Today’s judgment is an endorsement of the work and dedication that our staff put in every day, and which has seen these clients make progress in their rehabilitation journeys.

“I am pleased that the Court recognises the efforts of our staff and our service, and I welcome the decision to dismiss these claims.”

ENDS

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