



# Seclusion rates within a NSW rural Area Health Service



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The use of seclusion in acute mental health services is controversial. Legislation dictates that seclusion should be a patient management strategy utilised only in extreme circumstances. A review of existing literature suggests, however, that there are considerable variations in working definitions of seclusion and in the methodologies used in its implementation across locations.

Previous studies have infrequently compared practices across Mental Health Inpatient Units to determine whether such variations as have been reported occur within or between Area Health Services (AHS). With that in mind the data presented here were collected to review the use of seclusion in three DMHF within a single AHS. The NCAHS includes rural and regional settings in NSW (Australia) with no major metropolitan centres. The three urban centres captured are Tweed Heads, Lismore and Coffs Harbour.

As expected, the demographics of individuals secluded at these three sites reveal both consistencies and inconsistencies. The results obtained are intended for the use of developing education and training aimed at maximising the usefulness of seclusion as a patient management strategy, whilst minimising potential negative impacts upon patients.

*For the full report on this project visit our website, follow the link to the Rural Research Capacity Building Program and click on 'view completed projects'*

Lynn Davies is a Nurse Educator in the Coffs/Clarence Network. Both a clinical psychologist and a nurse, Lynn has had a long standing interest in research. Since completing her research as part of the Rural Research Capacity Building Program, Lynn has gone on to enrol in a PhD on this topic. Lynn also has a peer review article published.



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