



Mental Health Act 1959

1959 CHAPTER 72

PART V

ADMISSION OF PATIENTS CONCERNED IN CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS, ETC., AND TRANSFER OF PATIENTS UNDER SENTENCE

Provisions for compulsory admission or guardianship of patients convicted of criminal offences, etc.

60 Powers of courts to order hospital admission or guardianship

(1) Where a person is convicted before a court of assize or quarter sessions of an offence other than an offence the sentence for which is fixed by law, or is convicted by a magistrates' court of an offence punishable on summary conviction with imprisonment, and the following conditions are satisfied, that is to say—

(a) the court is satisfied, on the written or oral evidence of two medical practitioners (complying with the provisions of section sixty-two of this Act),

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(i) that the offender is suffering from mental illness, psychopathic disorder, subnormality or severe sub-normality ; and

(ii) that the mental disorder is of a nature or degree which warrants the detention of the patient in a hospital for medical treatment, or the reception of the patient into guardianship under this Act; and

(b) the court is of opinion, having regard to all the circumstances including the nature of the offence and the character and antecedents of the offender, and to the other available methods of dealing with him, that the most suitable method of disposing of the case is by means of an order under this section,

the court may by order authorise his admission to and detention in such hospital as may be specified in the order or, as the case may be, place him under the guardianship of a local health authority or of such other person approved by a local health authority as may be so specified.

- (2) Where a person is charged before a magistrates' court with any act or omission as an offence and the court would have power, on convicting him of that offence, to make an order under subsection (1) of this section in his case as being a person suffering from mental illness or severe subnormality, then, if the court is satisfied that the accused did the act or made the omission charged, the court may, if it thinks fit, make such an order without convicting him.
- (3) An order for the admission of an offender to a hospital (in this Part of this Act referred to as a hospital order) shall not be made under this section unless the court is satisfied that arrangements have been made for the admission of the offender to that hospital in the event of such an order being made by the court, and for his admission thereto within a period of twenty-eight days beginning with the date of the making of such an order.
- (4) An order placing an offender under the guardianship of a local health authority or of any other person (in this Part of this Act referred to as a guardianship order) shall not be made under this section unless the court is satisfied that that authority or person is willing to receive the offender into guardianship.
- (5) A hospital order or guardianship order shall specify the form or forms of mental disorder referred to in paragraph (a) of subsection (1) of this section from which, upon the evidence taken into account under that paragraph, the offender is found by the court to be suffering; and no such order shall be made unless the offender is described by each of the practitioners whose evidence is taken into account as aforesaid as suffering from the same one of those forms of mental disorder, whether or not he is also described by either of them as suffering from another of those forms.
- (6) Where an order is made under this section, the court shall not pass sentence of imprisonment or impose a fine or make a probation order in respect of the offence, but may make any other order which the court has power to make apart from this section; and for the purposes of this subsection " sentence of imprisonment" includes any sentence or order for detention, including an order sending an offender to an approved school.