

Mental Hygiene Act of 1938, Queensland

1938 – c. 1962

URL: http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/qld/hist_act/mhao19382gvn21245/

Details

The Mental Hygiene Act of 1938 required active treatment for the mentally ill. It also attempted to reduce the stigma associated with mental illness by changing words such as “lunatic”, “imbecile”, “insane” and “asylum”, to “mentally sick”, “mental illness” and “mental hospital”. The Act allowed for voluntary admission to mental hospitals and set out the powers of the Public Curator in modern language. The full title for this act was “An Act to consolidate and Amend the Law relating to the Care, Treatment, and Control of Mentally Sick Persons” (Act no. 2 Geo VI, No.21). The next major piece of legislation relating to Mental health in Queensland was the Mental Health Act 1962 (Act no.46/1962).

The Mental Hygiene Act of 1938 attempted to reduce the stigma associated with mental illness by changing words such as “lunatic”, “imbecile”, “insane” and “asylum”, to “mentally sick”, “mental illness” and “mental hospital”. However, the term continued to be used in the Annual Reports of the Department of Health and Home Affairs and the Department of Health up until the late 1960s.

More info

Chronology

- **Mental Hygiene Act of 1938, Queensland (1938 – c. 1962)**
 - Mental Health Act 1962, Queensland (1962 - 1974)

Related Entries

Related Organisations

- [Willowburn Mental Asylum \(1867 - 1953\)](#)

The Mental Hygiene Act of 1938 required active treatment for the mentally ill. It also attempted to reduce the stigma associated with mental illness.
- [Ipswich Mental Hospital \(1938 - 1964\)](#)

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