

In 1998, my son was 16. On his birthday he was placed on MH treatment order and hospitalised in [REDACTED] (I think now it's [REDACTED]). This was his first admission into hospital, and from here he was in and out and had several admissions from [REDACTED]. In 2001, he was transferred to the [REDACTED], for no medical reasons, he was here for 12 months. Some medical practitioners resigned his case workers from treating him and we spoke with the [REDACTED]. On [REDACTED] we publicly aired [REDACTED] on television. This was the first time that a mother had spoken about her son's challenges with mental health while he was still living. The state psychiatrist and [REDACTED] spoke, and [REDACTED] case worker spoke, I spoke, and a state politician spoke (this is all accessible on the public record).

My son had been discharged several weeks after this aired. We were going through a lot of problems, housing, treatment plan, the works (similar to what other families go through). He wasn't out of the system, but we were managing.

In [REDACTED], my son attended a private GP: he was in the consulting room for less than 3 minutes. He got a prescription for [REDACTED]. The following day he had his prescription filled (he always went to same chemist). The next day he took a large dose [REDACTED] [REDACTED] within hours, he died.

In [REDACTED] we had two Coroner's investigation. The first had a very full court room- every member of DHS. The Coroner was fantastic, I had a bad experience with the prosecutor. I asked the Coroner to do a toxicology report, and they said there was no need. I said he was held in care prior to his passing then, they were able to do one.

The first inquest was a room full of people, [REDACTED] were there and presented their doctor's statement. The doctor who prescribed the [REDACTED] had nothing in his report. The Coroner was very good and requested a DNA hair sample so that I could know the truth, because there was nothing in Medicare or no record that he was registered for the [REDACTED]. This was 2 years after he had passed. The sample showed negative [REDACTED]. The toxicology report showed that he had about [REDACTED] no alcohol and no other drugs, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] both of those prescriptions medications are on the poison list when used together. This is what caused him to die. They counteracted.

The Coroner's finding was medical negligence and they had made recommendations to the state Psychiatrist, pharmaceutical board, the medical board, prescription board and the government departments. To date I have not received communication about who the Coroner's recommendations were for or what has been done. I have not received any communication about if these recommendations have been implemented. My son's case is not accessible for me to search, it should be listed on the public record. This means we can't find any of the information.

The system is still broken despite improvements.

I have done a cry out telling people about the problems of the system, but they are still here. This is important for me and my recovery to tell this story. The stories need to be heard, people need to know that we are losing our children to medical negligence when on Mental Health orders. My son was healthy, the two prescribed medications were wrongly prescribed, and they counteracted, and he died.

The institutionalised infrastructure and working with dual diagnosis is broken. [REDACTED] was 'face judged', he was never checked or tested for drugs in his system. They made assumptions because of his skin colour. My story is just one story, but I know I am not alone.

When I rang [REDACTED], they asked how do we know it's true? I said ask the doctors, and all the doctors resigned.

I am dyslexic, so lots of paperwork doesn't work for me. I was out of school at 14. We need supports to help families. Paperwork can't be the only option when families are under stress. I see positive things in my experience, but the hardcore reality needs to be heard. The information was all there- the DNA, the Coroner's report, the Medicare. Out of all of this, the chemist played the best role. They knew him, and they questioned it, but [REDACTED] authorised it.

Dual diagnosis is the key point here. People can't be judged with dual diagnosis and they need to work hand in hand.

Institutionalised racism:

My son was dark skinned, I am fair skinned. I felt the difference- there were times people didn't believe I was his mother. This made things really hard, the doctors wouldn't tell me things thinking I wasn't his mother.

I had a beautiful healthy 14-year-old, a normal boy who played footy. He went overseas and came back a bit restless; the teenage years were hard. My son was always a sensitive boy. He was sensitive to cordial; a strong healthy boy, but sensitive.

The cleaning lady at the hospital said to me, "You have a beautiful boy. He always helps me with the cleaning".

██████ told me about another boy in the hospital and said we have to help him. The hospital wouldn't let the kid have his boomerang or didge or something. I said ██████ we have to look after ourselves.

My boy was always thinking of other kids. ██████ said, 'Mum we have to help other families'.

I was in the lift with the doctor at the hospital, and the doctor said to me, 'You're ██████ mum, aren't you?'.

I said, 'Yes I am. What the f*** is my son doing in here?'

The doctor said, 'that's what I'm trying to find out too'.

I went to the ██████ the next day.

I was always questioned from the institutions.

They didn't believe I was his mother. The privacy act was restrictive for me and parents/ carers to oversee their children.

██████ had a fear of needles, yet, when he was in care, he was forcible injected with medication. When

██████ said I didn't want to give blood to the doctors the privacy act protected him, but not when he was in the hospital. I can't understand the purpose of the act. They can put things into him but can't take blood out to check him.

16 is the wrong age for young people to have this level of privacy without their parents- they can't drive, can't drink, but can make medical decisions.

I see it with my grandchildren- different shades and colour of skin. My daughter-in-law experiences the same thing as me.

In the health sector we need to make sure that parents know and understand what's happening with their kids.