

Manslaughter

Poison / Drug

Maximum Penalty: 25 years (s.25 (NSW) Crimes Act)

	Case (age if known)	Type	Plea	Sentence	Appeal	Record	Facts
1.	Hunt NSWSC Hidden J 2.4.1996	Diminished responsibility Victim under 18y Poison / Drug	PG	MT 3y AT 4y		nil	Mother poisoned son on four occasions over several weeks Borderline personality disorder - symptoms of Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy
2.	Lamb NSWCCA 3.4.1997	Unlawful and dangerous - misc Poison / Drug Accessory	VG	MT 2y AT 2y	AD	nil	Female - principal in the second degree - co-offender injected self, offender and victim with drug - victim asked for more and offender reluctantly agreed to have co-offender inject more - tried to obtain help - intended no harm Low intellectual capacity – Aboriginal female - assistance re drug dealer - rehabilitation
3.	Wang [2000] NSWSC 447 Adams J	Unlawful and dangerous – assault Assault – domestic Strangulation Substantial impairment Poison / Drug Victim under 18y	PG Mansl (husband) Mansl (daughter)	6y NPP 4y 2y (concurrent)		nil	Female strangled husband and poisoned 1y daughter - attempting to kill self when found by police - accidentally killed husband trying to keep him from preventing her killing herself and daughter Severe depressive illness - daughter suffering from cerebral palsy and worried no one would look after her

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4.	Richards (39) [2002] NSWSC 415 Kirby J	Substantial impairment Victim under 18y Poison / Drug	PG (25%) Mansl 2 x Att murder	5y GBB (from date of sentence) FT 15m 10d (immediate release)		nil	Suffering delusional disorder focussed on perceived sexual abuse by fathers of children - faced losing custody of children at Family Court hearing - attempted to kill self and three children by carbon monoxide poisoning - only baby died Improvement in mental health - protective custody - remorse
5.	Guider (36 at offence - 52 at sentence) [2002] NSWSC 756 Wood CJ at CL	Unlawful and dangerous - misc Poison / Drug	PG	17y NPP 12y		sentenced for sexual offences committed on young children over lengthy period of time	(1986) killing of young girl - picked up victim and took her somewhere - victim died after being drugged with normison - body never recovered - no details of offence provided by offender - part of series of sexual offences committed on young children over 15y years - involved using stupefying drugs to take photographs and commit sexual acts Dysfunctional background - denied offence for long period of time - no insight into offending - dangerousness - strict protection - paedophilia
6.	Gow [2006] NSWDC 78 Berman DCJ	Criminal negligence Poison / Drug	PG	18m NPP 12m suspended		Nil	Patient died from drug prescribed by doctor – prescribed wrong form of morphine – failed to properly instruct victim as to taking of drug – failed to write instructions on prescription as required – looked up wrong drug in writing out required amount – tired and under stress Remorse – admitted mistake openly in court – excellent character – caring doctor
7.	Rowe (26) [2007] NSWSC 300 Howie J	Unlawful and dangerous - misc Victim under 18y Poison / Drug	VG (at murder trial)	5y 6m NPP 3y		Drugs and dishonesty	Mother killed 7m son by ingestion of methadone – struggling to cope with crying baby – sought to settle – distraught at death Disturbed childhood resulting in early drug addiction – onerous custodial conditions

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8.	Eckersley (66) [2021] NSWSC 562 Beech-Jones J	Substantial impairment Poison / Drug	VG (murder trial – 25% for offer to plead)	2y CCO		Nil	Female killed 92y mother at nursing home by mixing pentobarbitone into her soup and spoon feeding it to her – suffering severe depressive disorder – distressed by mother's suffering over many years as a result of deterioration in her health – not planned offence – formed intent to kill just prior to committing offence – acted out of love Aggravating factors – use of narcotic drug – in home of victim – breach of trust – victim vulnerable because of age Prior good character – good prospects of rehabilitation – remorse

Last Updated: February 2025