

Hospital Discharge Report - Summary



April 2010

Our report on hospital discharge calls for better communication, less waiting for medication, and improved support for patients after discharge.

The report is based on Hull LINK's largest investigation to date. Over 100 people and groups had their say on this issue, and we also made the first use of our enter and view power to speak to patients and observe services at local hospitals.

Many people involved with the LINK told us they were concerned about hospital discharge. Some said they or members of their families had had bad experiences; others who work with vulnerable people told us about problems their clients have had.

What we did...

Our investigation involved:

- A survey of patients and carers to find out about their experiences of hospital discharge.
- A survey and one to one interviews with staff and volunteers from groups which support people in the community to find out about the issues their clients face.
- Enter and view visits to Hull Royal Infirmary and Castle Hill Hospital to speak to patients about how discharge worked for them.

What people told us...

A lot of people were keen to have their say on this issue. While some people were happy with the service they received, others were less satisfied. Our investigation highlighted a number of problems:

- Poor communication with patients and carers, and between different services.



- Long waits for medication from the hospital pharmacy when patients are discharged.
- Poor assessment of people's care needs and how they will be able to manage at home
- Not enough support for patients after they have been discharged.

Our recommendations...

Hull LINK has used its legal power to make recommendations to the NHS and local authority. We have called for:



- Training for staff at the hospital to improve communication with patients.
- An action plan at local hospitals to reduce the time patients have to wait for medication.
- Services to work together better to ensure people's needs are assessed before they go home.
- Improved information for patients on sources of help in the community after they are discharged.

Services have a legal duty to respond to LINK recommendations within 20 working days. We will keep our members informed of progress with securing improvements in services.

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