

LINK in Action: Hospital Discharge



August 2010

This briefing brings you up to date on progress with the LINK's work on hospital discharge. Our report of April 2010 made a number of recommendations to improve services, based on feedback from over 100 individuals and groups.

Under the LINK's legal powers, services have to respond to recommendations we make. This is a summary of how local services have responded.

Our report...

Our investigation involved consultation with people about their experiences, and with groups which support vulnerable people. Based on what local people and groups told us, we made recommendations to:

- Improve communication with patients and their families.
- Reduce waiting times for medication for people leaving hospital.
- Promote better joint working to ensure people's needs are assessed before they go home.
- Improve information for patients on sources of help in the community after they are discharged.

The Response...

Discharge Policy

The NHS and the city council told us they have reviewed their joint Discharge and Transfer of Care Policy. There will be new targets to improve bed management, reduce length of stay and reduce delays.

Communication

Services recognised that communication needs to improve. The hospital trust have agreed to circulate our findings to all staff to stress the need for improved communication. New training for staff will have a significant

emphasis on effective communication and will be in place by December 2010.

Care Needs

The council told us that, following a review of intermediate care services, all those likely to need ongoing social services support will be expected to receive a spell of rehabilitation or reablement to bridge the transition between hospital and home.

Medication

The hospital trust told us that several new ways are being trialled to reduce waiting times for medication on discharge, including an increase in opening times at the pharmacy department.



Information

The hospital trust has agreed to review information on help in the community for patients, and will work with the LINK and others to update this.

In addition to the above actions, NHS Hull have told us they will review progress on all recommendations as part of their contract with the hospital trust.

Hull LINK will monitor progress on all recommendations and will keep members informed of developments.



www.hull-link.org.uk

