

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

**DISCHARGE FROM HOSPITAL
HOME OF CHOICE POLICY**

BACKGROUND

- ⇨ Within Derbyshire there are an increasing number of hospital beds being used by local people waiting for discharge into a nursing or residential home placement of their choice.

PROCESS

- ⇨ A referral to the Social Services Department for patients within hospital will be allocated to an appropriate worker within one working day of receipt into the Department.
- ⇨ An assessment of the patient's social care needs will be undertaken within five working days in conjunction with the multi-disciplinary team.
- ⇨ An assessment of the patient's nursing needs will be undertaken by the primary/specialist nurse within the same five working days. Where a patient is deemed to have an unstable medical condition the nursing assessment will be reviewed within an agreed period of time with the medical team. It will be deemed that these patients are not fit for discharge.

STAGE ONE

- ⇨ Following the completion of the nursing and social care needs assessment the patient and their family/relative/carer will be asked to identify a placement that is appropriate to meet the patients assessed health and social care needs. The placement for the service user/patient will be identified within two weeks. The term placement is used here to mean, placement in nursing home/residential care home, day care or care at home.

STAGE TWO

- ⇨ If a home is chosen which does not have a vacancy the care manager will ask the service user/patient/relatives/carers to identify an alternative placement where there is a vacancy, after a period of four weeks or 20 working days.

This four week period is included to enable a placement to be made in the home of choice if possible. After four weeks it will be necessary to find an alternative placement.

The patient should be discharged to an alternative local placement within five working days of a nursing or residential placement becoming available.

When a patient is identified as requiring an alternative placement, funded by the Local Authority, a funding request should be registered with the Area Manager of the appropriate service division immediately.

The patient will not be discharged until funding is agreed from the relevant Area Manager.

Where the care manager has reason to believe that the patient's advocates are not acting in the best interests of the patient, the care manager will work with the hospital management team to facilitate the patient's discharge. The hospital and Social Services Department must be satisfied that the patient does not have capacity to make decisions and a medical opinion must be sought and documented in the health and social care records.

In these circumstances legal advice should be sought prior to any action being undertaken.

Following legal advice the Social Services Department will be available to assist the hospital with the discharge process outlined above. The decision to discharge will be the responsibility of the NHS.

During extreme pressures on hospital bed availability patients who are assessed by the multi-disciplinary team as fit for discharge may be required to move to an alternative setting or an alternative NHS funded facility.

REVIEW

If the patient does not consent to the care arrangements being proposed in Stage 2 the patient can use the NHS Complaints Process to obtain a review of the decision while they remain in hospital. Any complaints about the implementation of the Department of Health Choice of Accommodation Guidance should be made using the Social Services complaints process.

INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

Information leaflets for patients and their families which describe this approach have been prepared and will be given to appropriate patients.

Approved at Cabinet 6/8/02
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