



## COT/ BAOT Briefings

### Discharging People from Hospital

**Revision Date:** September 2007  
**Lead Group:** Professional Practice  
**Review Date:** March 2009  
**Country Relevance:** UK wide

#### Introduction

This COT/BAOT Briefing will provide information on the requirements, guidance and resources concerned with discharging people from hospital that occupational therapists may find useful. The material highlighted is from health and social care, service user and carer perspectives. They are presented alphabetically. Although some of the information is generic, it does not specifically look at discharge from mental health care, or the requirements of any mental health legislation.

#### Achieving timely simple discharge from hospital: A toolkit for the multi-disciplinary team

The Department of Health published this toolkit in 2004. It provides best practice guidance that focuses on the practical steps that health and social care professionals can take to improve discharge from hospital. The toolkit supports members of the multi-disciplinary team by providing practical advice, fact sheets and case studies.

The toolkit can be used in a number of different ways. The 10 Step Guide is central to improving hospital discharge processes and can be used to make sure that all the essential steps are covered. The case studies contain information about how others have made changes and their contact details are included. The fact sheets provide practical tools to check how you are doing and to identify what else needs to be done. They include examples of key aspects of improved discharge procedures that can be adapted to a local situation.

The toolkit publication is available to download from:

[www.dh.gov.uk/prod\\_consum\\_dh/groups/dh\\_digitalassets/@dh/@en/documents/digitalasset/dh\\_4088367.pdf](http://www.dh.gov.uk/prod_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/@dh/@en/documents/digitalasset/dh_4088367.pdf)  
 (Accessed 10/09/2007)

The Department of Health has also launched checklists that will contribute to more effective discharge as part of a total approach to improving bed management and flow of patients into and out of hospital.

[www.dh.gov.uk/en/AdvanceSearchResult/index.htm?searchTerms=checklists+%2Bdischarge](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/AdvanceSearchResult/index.htm?searchTerms=checklists+%2Bdischarge)  
 (Accessed 10/09/2007)

Amongst these is a checklist is a supplementary checklist to help with planning the discharge from acute general hospital settings of people with dementia

#### Alzheimer's Society Information Sheet February 2005 - Hospital discharge

The web site of the Alzheimer's Society provides a broad range of practical information sheets for those caring for a person with dementia. The sheet on hospital discharge describes what a



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service user and their carer should expect from health and social services and describes the possible care options.

The sheets are available at: [www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk)

(Accessed 10/09/2007)

### **Change Agent Team**

The Health and Social Care Change Agent Team has a variety of good practice guides available on their web site, from brief self-assessment checklists and comprehensive Department of Health guidance.

<http://changeagentteam.org.uk/index.cfm?pid=18&sectorID=11>

(Accessed 10/09/2007)

### **Creek J (2003) Occupational therapy defined as a complex intervention**

In this evidence-based definition, Creek describes the occupational therapy process. The end of intervention or discharge is explained within this context on page 26.

### **Delayed Discharges**

*Community Care (Delayed Discharges, etc.) Act 2003*

The Act was introduced to attempt to reduce delays in hospital discharge. It requires NHS bodies to notify local authorities of people who are likely to need social care support upon discharge, and to work with them to assess their needs. The local authority then has an agreed number of days (a minimum of two) to put together a discharge plan and care package for the service user. If they fail to do this, or if the individual's hospital discharge is delayed because the discharge plan for the service user or their carer is not ready, the local authority must pay a daily reimbursement charge to the NHS body. The Act also makes some community services free of charge, including intermediate care and certain equipment services.

The Act can be downloaded from:

[www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2003/20030005.htm](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2003/20030005.htm)

(Accessed 10/09/2007)

The Department of Health provides further information on its web site:

[www.dh.gov.uk](http://www.dh.gov.uk)

(Accessed 10/09/2007)

### **Discharge from hospital: a good practice checklist**

Published by the Department of Health in 2002, this document is a checklist to help Councils with social care responsibilities and their NHS partners to assess their current arrangements; to identify what changes may be needed to further improve their practice in hospital discharge; and to improve their joint working.

[www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH\\_4005332](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_4005332)

(Accessed 10/09/2007)

### **Directgov**

Directgov is a web site dedicated to providing information and guidance to the public about government services. It has information on health services, including discharge services for disabled people. Directgov may be a useful resource for service users.

The web site may be found at: [www.direct.gov.uk/Homepage/fs/en](http://www.direct.gov.uk/Homepage/fs/en)

(Accessed 10/09/2007)

### **Discharge from Hospital: pathway, process, and practice**

*Discharge from Hospital: pathway, process and practice*, was published by the Department of Health in January 2003. It provides guidance on good practice, updating and building upon the *Hospital discharge workbook* published in 1994.



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[www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH\\_4003252](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_4003252)  
(Accessed 10/09/2007)

**Hospital Discharge: Homelessness and Health Information Sheet No 4 (2005)**

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has produced a series of health information sheets related to homelessness. The intention is to raise awareness of specific service areas that can enable homeless people to receive appropriate and timely health care. Each sheet includes examples to illustrate good or innovative practice in the relevant service area. The guidance is available to download from:

[www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/homelessnessinformationsheethosp](http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/homelessnessinformationsheethosp)  
(Accessed 10/09/2007)

**Immediate Discharge Document**

This short Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network (SIGN) guideline, published in 2003, provides an evidence-based description of good discharge documentation.

It can be downloaded from the SIGN web site at:

[www.sign.ac.uk/pdf/sign65.pdf](http://www.sign.ac.uk/pdf/sign65.pdf) (Accessed 10/09/2007)

**Involving individual older patients and their carers in the discharge process from acute to community care: implications for intermediate care.**

**SCIE Research briefing 12**

This briefing from the Social Care Institute for Excellence concerns the involvement of older service users (aged 65 and over) and carers in the process of assessment and discharge to community care, especially intermediate care. It is also referred to on the web site as: *Research briefing 12: Involving older people and their carers in after-hospital care decisions*

The briefing is available to download the Institute's web site at:

[www.scie.org.uk/publications/briefings/briefing12/index.asp](http://www.scie.org.uk/publications/briefings/briefing12/index.asp) (Accessed 10/09/2007)

**Leaving Hospital – Revisited. (2005) Commission for Social Care Inspection report**

This report on the experiences of older people after leaving hospital reveals that decisions that are made at the time of discharge from hospital can have long-term consequences. It stresses the value of rehabilitation and independence over the choice of residential care. The report finds that very few people who go into residential care at this time return to their own homes, and that older people are less likely to need residential care if the right support and rehabilitation is offered to them on leaving hospital. The report is available to download from the Commission's web site at:

<http://www.csci.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=1104&key=> (Accessed 10/09/2007)

**National Assembly for Wales**

In May 2005 *Hospital discharge planning guidance* was issued, updating and replacing the former *Discharging patients from hospital*. The new guidance, covering all adults, takes into account new commissioning arrangements and statutory requirements for partnership working between the NHS and local authorities; along with recent policy developments. It outlines the requirements of local discharge policies within the context of the Unified Assessment. A checklist is provided with the document that aims to assist local organisations to identify areas within current discharge policies and protocols that require further development.

<http://cymru.gov.uk/publications/circular/circulars05/1560146/?lang=cy>

(Accessed 10/09/2007)



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The *National service framework for children, young people and maternity services in Wales* was launched in September 2005. A number of its standards contain recommendations and requirements relevant to the discharge of children from hospital.

### **NHS Continuing Care**

NHS continuing care can be defined as fully funded care for people who do not need to be in hospital, but still require a high degree of ongoing health care. Anybody can apply for continuing care, but the NHS trust is required to assess a person's needs for fully funded NHS continuing care against SHA eligibility criteria. The distinction between health and social care can be blurred and the interpretation and application of criteria is difficult (House of Commons Health Committee 2005).

The Change Agent Team worked with the Department of Health policy team to develop *the National framework for NHS continuing healthcare and NHS-funded nursing care in England*, to be implemented from 1 October 2007. This framework aims to make the assessment process easier to understand and operate and to improve consistency both at a national and local level. The document is available from:

<http://changeagentteam.org.uk/index.cfm?pid=34&catalogueContentID=2382>

(Accessed 10/09/2007)

*The delayed discharges (Continuing care) directions 2007*

[www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Legislation/DH\\_078053](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Legislation/DH_078053)

*The NHS (Nursing care in residential accommodation) (England) directions 2007*

[www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Legislation/DH\\_078061](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Legislation/DH_078061)

*The NHS continuing healthcare (Responsibilities) directions 2007*

[www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Legislation/DH\\_078059](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Legislation/DH_078059)

All the above directions make compliance with the National Framework for NHS Continuing Healthcare and NHS-funded Nursing care mandatory, with effect from 1 October 2007.

### **The Scottish Government**

The Scottish Government (formerly Executive) has a range of information, resources and good practice examples on the Health and Community Care section of its web site, although it is not always straightforward to find. They have produced a number of circulars concerning hospital discharge, for example:

- **Framework for the production of joint hospital discharge protocols.**

This circular follows on from the Scottish Executive's *Delayed Discharge Action Plan* of 2002. It identifies best practice for local authorities and NHS Boards to work together to ensure safe and effective hospital discharge. It is available at:

[www.show.scot.nhs.uk/sehd/publications/CC2003\\_09.pdf](http://www.show.scot.nhs.uk/sehd/publications/CC2003_09.pdf)

(Accessed 10/09/2007)

- **Choice of accommodation – discharge from hospital**

This circular defines how local authorities and NHS boards should manage the choice of care homes for people leaving hospital.

[www.show.scot.nhs.uk/sehd/publications/CC2003\\_08.pdf](http://www.show.scot.nhs.uk/sehd/publications/CC2003_08.pdf)

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