

DISCHARGE FROM HOSPITALS AND AFTER CARE SURVEY REPORT

IMPLEMENTATION BY SERVICE PROVIDERS OF RECOMMENDATIONS

25th MAY 2011

The LINK Discharge from Hospitals and After Care Survey Report was completed in April 2010. Following subsequent meetings with Doncaster and Bassetlaw Hospital Foundation Trust and Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council regarding implementation of LINK recommendations we now submit our final report.

Doncaster and Bassetlaw Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

A total of 6 recommendations were made to the Trust who recognised there were concerns around patient discharge and have reviewed their discharge policies.

The Trust stated the Doncaster LINK Discharge from Hospitals and After Care Survey Report helped to confirm they were on the 'right track' in identifying changes that needed to be made.

During the past months they have introduced new systems. The Trust has introduced pilot posts of Ward Co-ordinators who deal with planning, co-ordination and communication relating to the discharge of patients. They have also introduced a web-based system called i Tracker on which each patient's pathway is logged and all discharge planning can be accessed.

Recommendation 1

All patients needing after care in the community to be given a written 'After Care Package' containing telephone numbers of relevant contacts and a copy of the letter from hospital to their GP.

The Trust informed Doncaster LINK it is the responsibility of each Ward to provide information to patients upon discharge. The Ward Physiotherapist provides the contact number of the Community Therapist. This practice exists on some Wards but is not yet operated on all Wards. The Trust has agreed to further discussions with staff regarding this practice.

Recommendation 2

Patients to be asked to show their copy of the hospital letter to the GP, Community Nurses and other service providers attending.

The Trust informed Doncaster LINK that their Discharge Letter is now faxed to GP's within 24 hours. Community Nurses can access this from GP Surgeries. The Trust is looking to send this information electronically in the future.

Recommendation 3

All medication for patients awaiting discharge from hospital to be available within the Government guideline of 4 hours.

The above recommendation is still an area for concern.

The Trust has informed the LINK a team has been set up to look at a revised medicine policy. The Doncaster LINK Executive Board has agreed to the formation of a new working group to allow a more in-depth look at this issue.

Recommendation 4

Training to be given to hospital staff to develop communication skills in explaining the purpose, changes and side effects of medication, especially aimed towards the 18-39 and 70+ year olds.

The Trust states a new medicines policy has been introduced. Nurses are trained in practice on the Ward and have to undertake a Medication Competency Test in delivery, knowledge and communication. Nurses now have three assessments including being observed. These assessments are mandatory and are to be carried out annually.

Recommendation 5

Medication which is no longer prescribed to be withdrawn.

The Trust has informed the LINK that it is the responsibility of the Nurse who is dealing with the patient's discharge to ensure that medication which is no longer prescribed is withdrawn. A second check is now made by another designated Nurse to ensure the patient is not discharged with medication that is no longer required.

Recommendation 6

Relevant patients and carers to be informed of the Nomad system.

The Trusts policy is that if a patient arrives at the hospital with a Nomad it is noted upon admission. If there is no change in the patient's medication they leave with the same Nomad. There is now more advocacy around the use of the Nomad system for patients who would benefit from it.

Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council

One recommendation in four parts was made to the Council regarding the review of client care after discharge from hospital. The DMBC Social Services Department informed the LINK that they are currently reviewing the entire discharge policy and pathway and state the Discharge from Hospitals and After Care Survey Report helped them to focus on some of the areas that needed to be improved.

Recommendation 7

All patients needing continuing care in the community to have the following:

- ***An on-going review of their after care***
- ***A formal review within 3 months of discharge***
- ***Thereafter a review every 6 months***
- ***Reviews to be provided upon request***

Bullet Point 1: The DMBC has informed Doncaster LINK that upon a patient's discharge from hospital a review takes place whilst the patient is still in hospital.

Bullet Point 2: The DMBC's current policy is after the initial review a further review is made by a dedicated review team 12 week's after the patient's discharge.

Bullet Point 3 and 4: A six monthly review does not take place. The LINK has been informed that within the first year of the patient's discharge from hospital further reviews will be carried out by the District Social Services Team upon the patient's request and patients are informed of this.

The LINK is grateful for the cooperation given by the Hospital Trust and Doncaster Social Services Department. We are pleased with the progress made in addressing the recommendations of the LINK April 2010 report. We feel the people of Doncaster and Bassetlaw will benefit from the resulting changes both within the hospitals and on discharge into the community.

Whilst remaining independent, it is the hope of Doncaster LINK that we will continue to work in partnership with Doncaster Trust and Doncaster Council.