

Peoples Experiences of Hospital Discharge during Covid 19 - report 2020

Specific local findings for the **Bolton** area based on our interviews with local staff included:

- The swift development of the health and social care hub to provide a discharge pathway was praised and was said to be working well.
- From a home care provider perspective, District Nurses, Physiotherapist and Occupational Therapist remained involved with patient care upon discharge from hospital.
- There was some frustration around GPs not doing home visits to discharged patients resulting in some patients having to go by ambulance to A & E and resulting in some district nurses having to call ambulances. Although video technology was being used with GPs, it was not always suitable or effective and some patients have no access to the technology. This has caused stress and frustration to patients, families, and staff.
- When discharges take place particularly from critical care, there is a need for better psychological and mental health support for patients.
- Bolton Hospital has done a great job in communicating with staff under the circumstances, particularly district nursing staff.
- All Bolton Hospital staff (like patients and visitors) should wear face masks when moving between wards.
- Where appropriate and reasonable, a family member should be able to accompany their loved one to hospital to provide practical and emotional support. Each case should be accessed on an individual basis.
- Quality of information in discharge referrals could be better. Particularly ensuring that if a patient is Covid positive, that this is recorded on the referral.
- There have been some delays with care packages not being put in place for people still in hospital leading to frustration and stress to the patient, family and staff when the patient is discharged.
- NWAS's hospital discharge guidance was already in place. The new protocols strengthened existing relationships and helped to minimise impact on patients.
- The impact has been felt by each of us as individuals and as by organisations overall. Long term support systems for staff are going to be very important because of the impact of Covid.