

To: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE		Subject: DELAYED DISCHARGES REPORT & ACTION PLAN - SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE INITIATIVE
From: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK		
Date: 9 May 2002	Ref: MF/MM	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT / INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. To advise Committee of the launch of a new, major Scottish Executive Action Plan to reduce the impact of delayed discharges on acute hospital services and to deliver effective care packages for people who have spent significant periods in hospital care and to seek homologation for the Lanarkshire Action Plan submitted to the Scottish Executive.

2. CONTENT

- 2.1 Reducing the number of patients waiting for discharge is a high priority for the Scottish Executive, not only in terms of providing the most appropriate care to patients, but also in terms of enabling the NHS to use beds and other resources to treat patients who need to be admitted to hospital.
- 2.2 At any one time over 2,000 people across Scotland who no longer need NHS care have their discharge from hospital delayed beyond six weeks in Scotland – leaving one in ten NHS beds blocked for those needing medical treatment.
- 2.3 Experience had shown that concerted action is needed to be taken to minimise the number of people waiting to be discharged from hospital. It was noted that Minister's recognised the good work already being done on delayed discharges by Local Authority and NHS Partnerships and therefore wished to strengthen these partnerships further by allocating an additional 20 million pound funding which was announced in a report to the Local Authority/NHS Partnerships.
- 2.4 The additional funding is intended to ensure that 1000 extra people experiencing delayed discharges are transferred out of hospital and placed in more appropriate settings during the coming year, with the focus on those in acute sector beds and those waiting longer than a year.
- 2.5 Monies will be distributed to the Partnerships via NHS Boards. The Lanarkshire allocation is £2.126 million. Associated with the funding, is a target for the number of extra people experiencing delayed discharge being transferred out of hospital for each Partnership. Within Lanarkshire, the targets are as follows:
- The number of extra patients to be transferred to more appropriate care = 106
 - The target reduction for the acute sector = 18
 - The target reduction for patients who have been in hospital one year or over = 8

- 2.6 The funding is available for tackling delayed discharges only. It will be released by the Scottish Executive against joint Local Authority/NHS Board Action Plans. It is expected that the Joint Action Plans will promote innovative solutions which reduce the number of people experiencing delayed discharge and which:
- Help develop more community care services and support
 - Utilise existing care home places where appropriate
 - Bring into use extra NHS continuing care where care home capacity is limited
 - Increase the rate of assessment by social work staff
 - To provide more support at pre-admission and admission stages
 - To develop stronger liaison between Social Work and NHS emergency services for older people to head off avoidable hospital admissions
 - Begin rehabilitation earlier.
- 2.7 Because urgent action is needed, up to twenty five percent of the funding allocated to each partnership will be made available from the 1st April in advance of the Action Plans being submitted, but only for this initiative. Funding will not be provided to substitute for reduced levels of funding from NHS Boards or Local Authorities.
- 2.8 The Scottish Executive will monitor performance closely, and where partnerships fail to deliver will not release future funds. A Support Team has been established which will assist those partnerships which are unable to resolve difficulties.

3. CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 Joint Action Plans, signed by all the Partnership Chief Executives, were expected to be submitted to the Executive by Friday 26th April 2002. It is then expected that the plans will be evaluated by the Scottish Executive Health Department and full funding will be released once the plans have been approved. It is expected that the approval and funding letters will be issued by Friday 24th May, 2002.
- 3.2 In view of the very tight timescale for the submission of the Joint Action Plans, Cosla negotiated a two week extension.
- 3.3 Within Lanarkshire, senior officers from the NHS Board, the two Lanarkshire Health Trusts and the two Local Authorities have been working to develop an Action Plan to address the issues raised by the Executive.
- 3.4 Within North Lanarkshire, a number of strategies have already been developed which complement the Action Plan proposals with a particular emphasis on supporting people at home and avoiding hospital or residential or nursing home admission as appropriate. For example a range of service developments has been approved or considered by Committee including, the development of the Home Care Service, extension of the Community Alarm Service, the creation of Early Supported Discharge Teams and additional funding for equipment and adaptations.
- 3.5 The proposals currently being considered and developed by the Partnership are consistent with the Council's Community Care Plan.
- 3.6 Proposals under consideration include integration of Early Supported Discharge and Rapid Response Teams, review of both Health and Social Care processes, review of local Partnership monitoring arrangements and other service developments.
- 3.7 The Lanarkshire Action Plan will require to be signed off by Agency Chief Executives prior to submission to the Scottish Executive.
- 3.8 Timescales are such that the Action Plan will require to be submitted prior to consideration by Social Work Committee. It is intended that the Convener of Social Work review the Plan prior to submission.

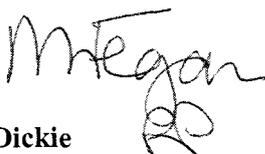
4. FINANCIAL/POLICY/PERSONNEL/LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 Additional funding of 2.126 million pounds has been allocated to the Lanarkshire Partnerships to address the issue of delayed discharges. At this stage it is not clear how the funding will be used or allocated across the key partners. This will be subject to consideration by the Joint Planning Executive and will require to be agreed following the submission of the bid by the Scottish Executive.
- 4.2 It is anticipated that several new posts and service developments will be proposed for North Lanarkshire which are consistent with Council policy and which will be funded from Action Plan monies.
- 4.3 Subject to Committee approval, it is hoped that these developments can be considered by the Convener under delegated authority given the urgency imposed on the arrangements by the Executive. This is consistent with the proposals contained within a separate report to Committee titled "Implementation of Social Work Priorities 2002".

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

Committee is asked to:

- (i) Note the allocation of additional funding to the Lanarkshire Partnerships to address delayed discharges
- (ii) Homologate the Action Plan submitted to the Scottish Executive.
- (iii) Authorise the Convener of Social Work to approve necessary service developments.
- (iv) Request the Director of Social Work to submit a report on the implications and progress of the Action Plan for North Lanarkshire.
- (v) Otherwise note the contents of the report.



Jim Dickie
Director of Social Work
25 April 2002

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