

# AGENDA ITEM No. 4

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

## REPORT

To: SOCIAL WORK (OPERATIONS AND SERVICES) SUB-COMMITTEE	Subject: WINTER PRESSURES – SOCIAL WORK AND HEALTH INITIATIVES OVER THE FESTIVE PERIOD
From: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK	
Date: 22.02.05	Ref: JD/JN/CC

### 1. Purpose of Report/Introduction

The purpose of this report is to inform Committee of initiatives over the festive season to prevent delayed discharges and inappropriate admissions to and from hospitals.

### 2. Background

- 2.1. Reducing the number of patients waiting for discharge from hospital is a high priority for the Scottish Executive. This 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. The majority of people who are discharged from NHS Hospitals are dealt with promptly. Delayed discharges can occur however when a patient is ready to be discharged from hospital but cannot leave because the other necessary care or support has not been assessed or put in place.
- 2.3. Every year the Lanarkshire Delayed Discharge/Winter Pressures Monitoring Group introduce short term initiatives to augment existing resources over the winter period. This year the group identified Christmas and New Year for a specific initiative to supplement staff availability to provide faster responses to hospital discharges and to prevent admissions.

### 3. Winter Pressures Initiatives - Social Work Service

- 3.1. With the Monday and Tuesday of both Christmas and New Year weeks designated as the public holiday days for hospital and area team based social work staff, the following initiatives were put in place on each of the four days:

- Assessment Staff within Monklands and Wishaw General Hospitals

Two assessment staff, with admin support, were located within each of the General Hospitals to undertake community care assessments where a patient was clinically stable and ready for discharge.

- Home Support Provision

Two additional Home Support Managers were located within the Home Support Out of Hours Service with the dedicated remit to:

- co-ordinate the provision of home support to individuals being discharged from hospital
  - augment existing levels of home support services for known service users where failure to provide additional support would require them to be hospitalised, and
  - undertake assessments of individuals not currently in receipt of home support services referred by community based Health colleagues or Social Work Stand-by, where failure to provide home support would result in their hospitalisation.
- Dedicated Home Support Staff

On each of the four days 12 Home Support Workers were located at Merrystone Care Base to enable faster and more flexible support to be provided to prevent admissions or facilitate discharges from both Hospitals.

- Equipment

Small items of equipment are often required as part of the discharge package to assist a service user on their return home from hospital. Over the period basic occupational therapy equipment, including commodes could be accessed via the MIDAS Team at Monklands Hospital.

Community Alarms were also available for immediate installation, including a number of 'ruggedised' alarm units where the service user did not have a telephone line.

#### **4. Conclusion**

- 4.1 Initial evaluation suggests that this initiative has been a success. Both Monklands and Wishaw General Hospitals remained open during the period and patient need was dealt with.

#### **5. Financial/Personnel/Legal/Policy Implications**

- 5.1. The funding for this initiative was made available from Winter Pressures Monies with the total cost being recharged from Social Work to the Delayed Discharge Initiative.
- 5.2. There were no personnel, legal or policy implications. Assessor and Manager staff who worked during the period did so on a voluntary basis. Home Support Workers on duty over the period were either rostered to work on the day(s) in question or volunteered to do so.

**6 Recommendations**

6.1 Committee is asked to:

- (i) note the contents of this report



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**1<sup>st</sup> February 2005**

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