

REPORT

To: SOCIAL WORK (OPERATIONS AND SERVICES) SUB-COMMITTEE		Subject: DELAYED DISCHARGE IN LANARKSHIRE : 2004/05
From: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK		
Date: 22.02.2005	Ref: JN/LMcA	

1. Purpose of Report/Introduction

This report informs Committee of the Council's contribution to tackling delayed discharge from hospitals in the NHS Lanarkshire area.

The report compares the Council's performance with targets set by the Scottish Executive and identifies some of the current themes and issues around the subject of delayed discharge.

2. Background

- 2.1. Reducing the number of patients waiting for discharge from hospital is a high priority for the Scottish Executive. This is important, not only in terms of providing the most appropriate care to patients, but also in terms of enabling the NHS to use resources as efficiently and effectively as possible.
- 2.2. On 5 March 2002, the Minister for Health and Community Care announced a Delayed Discharge Action Plan that contained a number of requirements for local authority / NHS partnerships to take forward. An allocation of funding of £20million between partner agencies was increased to £30million in 2003. The Lanarkshire partnership share of this funding was £2.126million in the first year and over £3million in future years. This funding was intended to assist partnerships in reducing the numbers of delayed discharges and individual partnership have been set targets to be met by 15 April in each of the three years since the initiative was introduced.
- 2.3. Target setting has been a source of continual debate and concern since the Delayed Discharge Initiative was introduced by the Scottish Executive. Targets bear no relationship to demands on the system, capacity within partnership areas or performance previous to the introduction of the initiative. Instead, targets are based on the share of funding given to each initiative.

3. Current Situation

- 3.1. The target for the Lanarkshire partnership in 2004/05 is that delayed discharges should have reduced to 98 by 15 April 2005. If this target is met, it will mean that delayed discharges in Lanarkshire have reduced from 245 in April 2002 and that will see a higher reduction in delayed discharges than in almost any other mainland area of Scotland.
- 3.2. Targets have not been set for individual Council areas but within the Lanarkshire partnership, there is an assumption that the population split of 55:45 between North Lanarkshire Council and South Lanarkshire Council respectively would serve as the

target indicator for each Council area. This means that the Scottish Executive target of 98 should be shared on the basis of 54 in North Lanarkshire and 44 in South Lanarkshire. Thus by 15 April 2005, there should be no more than 54 delayed discharges attributable to the North Lanarkshire Council area.

- 3.3. The approach adopted by the Lanarkshire partnership involves significant inter-agency working, a structure of rigorous and robust accountability from top to bottom in the partnership agencies and a strategy that pays as much attention to the prevention of hospital admission where possible as to the facilitation of appropriate and timeous discharge with necessary supports.
- 3.4. The performance of the Lanarkshire partnership in tackling delayed discharge has been exemplary over each of the last two years. The overall targets in each year were met and the partnership is well on its way to meeting the target for April 2005. At the time of writing, the census report for 15 January, the heart of the winter pressures period, showed that the number of delayed discharges in Lanarkshire had reduced to 104, only 6 away from the April target.

4. North Lanarkshire Council Position

- 4.1. Although the position in Lanarkshire is one of positive achievement, the picture for the North Lanarkshire Council area is even better. Of the 104 delayed discharges in Lanarkshire at 15 January 2005, only 46 were attributable to the North Lanarkshire Council area. This against a target for the Council area of 54 delayed discharges by 15 April.
- 4.2. The performance of the Council in supporting the partnership effort in tackling delayed discharge has been significant. This reflects the Council's commitment of meeting the community care needs of vulnerable people in North Lanarkshire, of the flexibility and responsiveness of Social Work services to support people in their own homes, and of efforts to prevent hospital admission and facilitate early discharge when it is safe to do so.

5. Financial/Personal/Legal/Policy Implications

- 5.1 There are no such implications in relation to this report which is for information only.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 Committee is asked to:
 - (i) Note the contents of this report.



J.P. **Jim Dickie**
Director of Social Work
(9th February 2005)

For further information on this report please contact Jim Nisbet, Manager, Older People's Services on telephone 01698-332031.