

1. Act Now – maximise your leadership this winter



“Compassionate leadership, commitment to improving patient care and dedication towards a culture for innovation and high quality care.”

Leading Change, Adding Value: a framework for nursing, midwifery and care staff (LCAV; NHS England, 2016) demonstrates nursing, midwifery and care staff, as leaders wherever they work, whatever their role.

LCAV highlights the huge capability, contribution and leadership that nursing and care staff across the whole health and social care system bring in leading the way in improving services.

Act Now:

- Encourage transparency and open communication between health and social care colleagues;
- Adopt the “Home First” principle to every discharge and encourage colleagues to do the same;
- Work effectively together as health and social care colleagues to embrace protocols and guidance that facilitate timely discharge;
- Undertake a rapid review of capacity and demand in community services and plan for any additional resources required;
- Adopt the Red Bag (or folder) Scheme to improve communication and timely, safe discharge;
- Ensure health and social care colleagues and local authorities work together to review and meet equipment needs to minimise delayed transfers of care;
- Disseminate and promote the [Healthy Ageing Guide](#) and [Healthy Caring Guide](#);
- Use care home availability tools to expedite discharges to care homes;
- Ensure an expected date of discharge is set within 48 hours of admission;
- Refer individuals to services in their community instead of offering medicalised solutions, where appropriate: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/personalised-health-and-care/social-prescribing/>



“A system needs strong nurse leaders in providers, social care and commissioning working together to maximise the collective effort to ensure people’s needs are recognised, and promptly acted upon. Let’s act now, to get people out of hospital and to their home.”

Ruth May, Executive Director of Nursing, NHS Improvement

‘Ensure every day in hospital directly contributes towards an individual’s discharge by adopting the [Red2Green approach](#)’:

- This approach is a visual management system which identifies wasted time (red days) in a patient’s journey;
- It can be used in both acute and community settings to reduce internal and external delays;
- It is encouraged to use this approach in conjunction with the [SAFER patient flow bundle](#);
- The resource supports staff and teams to reduce the number of ‘red days’ in favour of value-adding ‘green days’;
- Following the approach can make a real difference to a patient’s experience of care by reducing unnecessary delays.

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How can we as leaders reduce Delayed Transfers of Care?

- Work together with other health and social care colleagues to ensure there are joined up aims and objectives;
- Model high performing clinical leadership within your organisation to ensure a healthy culture is set;
- Be responsible for creating a continuous learning environment for all staff.

Multi-disciplinary working

- For healthcare professionals to be able to provide a coordinated and proactive service for individuals in need of care, integrated working with other organisations is essential;
- This includes, but is not limited to, other NHS care, social care (including care homes, homecare and housing providers) and voluntary services;
- Work with other organisations within the local area to work towards interoperability between the digital systems;
- Coordinated discharge planning based on joint assessment processes and on shared and agreed responsibilities promotes effective discharge and positive outcomes for patients;
- Focus on decision-making in the right place, making it a principle that assessment for long-term care may not need to not take place in hospital.

An extensive range of physical and mental health services are provided closer to home. These services support people to manage their health, recover from and prevent ill health, manage their long term condition(s), including frailty and rehabilitation.

Ensure you and your team are aware of the depth and breadth of community and support services available for your patients.

Commissioning standards – Community Health Services (2015)

All services play an essential role in making best use of capacity to keep people in the community where appropriate, reducing emergency hospital attendance and unplanned admissions as well as facilitating timely transfers of care.

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Framework-for-commissioning-community-nursing.pdf>

Additional resources:

<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/our-improvement-offer/care-and-health-improvement/systems-resilience/high-impact-change-model>

<https://improvement.nhs.uk/resources/good-practice-guide-focus-on-improving-patient-flow/>



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