

National Homeless Hospital Discharge Protocol

(Acute Hospitals and Mental Health Services)


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Background

- In 2002 the homeless preventative strategy was launched by the government and a number of government departments were involved (Justice, Health, Education & Housing).
- It was directed that each Health Board (at that time) should put a discharge protocol in place ensuring no person should be discharged from a hospital setting into homelessness.

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- In 2003 these protocols were developed by the National Integrated Care Advisory Group u under the auspices of the Quality and Safety Division.
 - Since 2003 here in Limerick we have worked off an agreed local Homeless Discharge Policy.

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- In 2014 the National Social Inclusion Office (Primary Care Division) established a Working Group. This included representatives from HSE Social Inclusion and Acute/Psychiatric Hospitals and as a result a broad national discharge policy was developed.

Agencies involved locally (Limerick) in implementing a Discharge Policy for Homeless Persons

- Bed Manager for all hospitals and Acute Psychiatric Units
- Discharge Coordinator for all hospitals and Acute Psychiatric Units
- Team Leader, Community Mental Health Nurse, Public Health Nurse from the Homeless Action Team
- Ward Managers/Clinical Nurse Manager for all Acute wards, general and mental health included

What works well

- Centre point of contact for hospital staff
- Ward staff aware of contact details for HAT once client is identified as homeless
- Holistic Needs Assessment completed by relevant discipline prior to discharge i.e. Public Health Nurse/Team Leader involvement and Local Authority staff if needed
- Ensures homeless clients do not go onto a delayed discharge list

What could be improved

- Ensure that new staff are aware of protocols and contact details for HAT
- Ensuring that the Emergency Department furnish a Discharge Summary for those clients in hostel accommodation
- Ensuring that the ED make telephone communication with the hostel regarding complex cases



Thank you!

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