



healthwatch
Somerset

EARLY SUPPORTED DISCHARGE

INDEPENDENT PATIENT ENGAGEMENT

MAY 2016

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INTRODUCTION

Early Supported Discharge (ESD) is a service that aims to help patients who have suffered a stroke to be discharged from hospital sooner and to carry out rehabilitation at home rather than in hospital.

Early Supported Discharge is an innovative and evolving service and Healthwatch Somerset is involved to support the development of a high quality service, ensuring that the patients voice is heard.

Healthwatch Somerset has been working with Somerset CCG to consider ways to support the process of gathering feedback on patients' experience of Early Supported Discharge. Healthwatch Somerset is well placed as the consumer champion for health and social care to act as an independent body to carry out consultation.

BACKGROUND

The early supported discharge service is now delivered county wide following on from a successful pilot in the Mendip area. The pilot demonstrated positive outcomes with good feedback from patients, their families and carers and staff. It established that ESD can support people with a range of needs and now extends to supporting people who have suffered a brain injury. A test and learn process is underway to understand the experience of patients who have received this service.

Healthwatch

Somerset
provide an
independent
consultation
process.

All patient
feedback is
recorded
anonymously.

HEALTHWATCH SOMERSET SUPPORT

Healthwatch Somerset is a member of the early supported discharge working group with commitment from the general manager and an Executive Group volunteer lead who champions stroke clubs. The early supported discharge working group is in place to review the test and learn process.

Healthwatch Somerset supported the test and learn by gathering feedback from patients to hear their views and experiences of the care and support they have received and their suggestions for how the service could be improved.

A consultation proposal was designed building on the format used for the Mendip pilot review. This was agreed by the early supported discharge working group. The proposal identified a range of engagement methods in order to capture the views of as many patients as possible. This included:

Focus groups

Patients were offered the opportunity to come to a focus group to share their views. Four focus groups were held across the county to consider equality of access. Healthwatch Somerset staff and volunteers facilitated discussions, recorded findings and offered one to one time to those who would prefer to feedback confidentially.

Telephone interview

Patients who could not or chose not to attend a focus group were offered the option to give their feedback over the phone. Healthwatch Somerset volunteers could carry out a telephone survey with a brief set of prompt questions.

Feedback by post

Patients were also be given the option to send in their feedback by post using the same prompt questions as the focus groups and telephone survey participants. Responses could be sent freepost to Healthwatch Somerset who will record the findings.

Consultation focus

The theme of the survey and prompt questions will be designed to explore the perceptions of patients, their families and carers in the following areas:

- What did you feel you needed the most following your stroke or brain injury?
- What was provided to you by the early supported discharge service?
- How well did the service meet your needs?
- Do you feel you went home at the appropriate time?
- What did it mean to you or your family to be able to go home from hospital sooner?
- How did you find the experience of setting goals?
- Was there anything that could have been done differently to improve the support you received?

The structure of the survey and focus groups was open and non-prescriptive, with participants encouraged to expand on their responses. In order to hear the perspective of carers the participants were separated into patient and carer groups where appropriate. Information gathered was recorded anonymously by Healthwatch Somerset and forwarded to the ESD working group to inform the pilot review report.

CONSULTATION PROCESS

Healthwatch Somerset supported patient engagement to gather feedback from patients who had experienced early supported discharge (ESD).

Four focus groups were held across the county:

- **21 April - South Petherton Community Hospital**
- **26 April - Williton Community Hospital**
- **3 May - Sydenham Community Centre, Bridgwater**
- **11 May - Shepton Mallet Community Hospital**

No patients requested the option of giving their feedback over the phone or by post.

In total we heard from 19 patients and 20 carers across the four groups.

The process was supported by six Healthwatch Somerset volunteers.

A complete transcript of all the comments made was compiled and from this an overview report was provided, summarising the findings.

The focus groups provided valuable information for clinicians and commissioners to hear how the service is perceived by those who receive it. Patients described a generally positive experience but were also able to provide useful suggestions for improvements and evidence of person experience which can be learned from.

MOVING FORWARD

The patient information gathered will feed in to the overall evaluation of this pilot project and be presented to the Clinical Operations Group in June. Healthwatch Somerset will be able to share in more detail the findings of the consultation process once this has happened.

It is anticipated that we will revisit the patient consultation process in six months' time to reassess the patient experience.