

Respite care for vulnerable patients on discharge from hospital - Bradford



Bradford Respite and Intermediate Care Support Service (BRICSS) is an intermediate care facility providing respite accommodation for vulnerable patients on discharge from hospital. They aim to support patients who need continuing medical care or have unsuitable or no accommodation and so would otherwise have a prolonged stay in hospital or be discharged onto the streets. Patients are cared for in a dedicated facility containing 14 studio flats. The service is staffed by a team of resettlement and housing officers and by a GP and nurse who perform a ward round twice a week. Staff provide an integrated, holistic service of medical and social care including long term medicine management, nutritional meals, housing assistance, and benefits help.

In the first 3 months, the facility housed 16 patients for an average of 3.3 weeks each. A cost analysis of just 5 of these patients revealed that their most recent experience with health services had cost the NHS £208,000 through re-admission and prolonged hospital stays, money which could have been saved if the BRICSS team had been involved earlier. Furthermore, staff ensured that **every patient discharged from BRICSS had a discharge plan in place and suitable accommodation** to move into.

The project is run through the collaboration of several agencies including Bevan Healthcare CIC, a specialist primary care service for homeless people, Horton Housing, a specialist housing provider for complex needs and Bradford Pathways team, who refer suitable patients from the local acute hospital to the project. The initial 3 month pilot was funded by the Department of Health's Homeless Health Discharge Fund, which also provided funding to purchase and refurbish the building. After an interim evaluation demonstrating the effectiveness of the project, it has now secured a year's funding from Bradford CCG and Bradford Public Health, until March 2015. Furthermore, the project has been extended into the adjacent building, which will provide intensive managed housing, allowing patients to be discharged from BRICSS more quickly.

The project is managed by an Operational Group of health, housing and social workers which manage the day to day problems. This group reports to a Strategic Board of key workers from across health and housing organisations, and local commissioners. Bevan Healthcare attest that it is good long term relationships between organisations that are key to ensuring the success of the project, including stakeholder involvement and informal visits by the board member to meet service users.

Want to Pilot a Respite Accommodation Scheme?

- Work in partnership with an experienced provider of single homeless accommodation as they will have experience in finding, refurbishing and running a residence.
- Work in partnership with a hospital based discharge team
- Be prepared to get together a viable bid quickly when funding becomes available. In line with the HSCA (2012), many CCGs should have homeless health on the agenda, but picking where many people are experiencing homelessness may lead to a better chance of success.