

# Evidence Bites: Patient discharge

Evidence, innovation and good practice on a topic inspired by safety discussions held at the WUTH Safety Summit

Mar 2018

## Why is patient discharge a safety issue?

A 2016 report published by the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsmen<sup>1</sup> found that some NHS patients were being discharged unsafely from hospital. Case studies highlighted that patients were being discharged before they were well enough to go home, without a home care plan and without informing their family and carers. NICE's social care guidance, 'Transition between inpatient hospital settings and community or care home settings for adults with social care needs'<sup>2</sup> aimed to address these concerns and gaps in care.

## How are other hospitals tackling safety issues relating to patient discharge?

Other NHS Trusts have implemented a range of measures to improve the patient discharge process including:

- One stop ward rounds
- Effective use of expected date of discharge (EDD)
- Transport - ensuring arrangements are in place beforehand
- Take out drugs (TTAs/TTOs)
- Avoiding equipment delays
- Use simple rules to reduce variation (e.g. SAFER)
- Nurse led / facilitated discharge

Some good examples of these initiatives are available on the Academy of Fabulous Stuff<sup>3</sup>.

[Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust \(NUH\)](#) developed a single site Discharge Directory where all information related to Discharge including processes, policies, top tips and contact numbers are held.

At the [Royal United Hospitals](#), Bath, a Discharge Assessment team is a therapy lead service is based in the Emergency Department to support hospital flow, and timely discharge for their patients.

## Further reading

1. Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsmen (2016), [A report of investigations into unsafe discharge from hospital](#)
2. NICE (2015), [Transition between inpatient hospital settings and community or care home settings for adults with social care needs](#)
3. [Academy of Fabulous Stuff – Improving the time of discharge for patients](#)

For more details or to request an electronic copy of the below, or if you'd like an Evidence Bite on another topic, please contact the Library & Knowledge Service at [wuth.lks@nhs.net](mailto:wuth.lks@nhs.net) or ext. 8610.