

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE : 9 APRIL 2002

DELAYED DISCHARGES ACROSS SCOTLAND

Report by the Director of Educational and Social Services

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To advise Committee of the announcement by the Minister for Health and Community Care of £20 million to address delayed discharge across Scotland, and to advise members of the immediate action taken, and future action required.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 A person becomes defined as having their discharge from hospital delayed when they no longer require NHS care, but can not be discharged from hospital, as they are undergoing an assessment, are involved in a dispute over their finances or assessed needs, or where there is a lack of funding for their assessed long term care.
- 2.2 Since September 2000, a quarterly census has been undertaken across Scotland to determine the number of delayed discharges, and reasons why this occurs.
- 2.3 In August 2001 the Minister for Health and Community Care asked the Head of the Scottish Executive Health Department to consider the delayed discharge situation. A multi-agency group was formed and a report on recommendations for immediate and long term action was produced on 5th March 2002.
- 2.4 The Minister then charged Chairs of NHS Boards to ensure partnership groups in each NHS area proceeded immediately to action the recommendations, and to provide a full action plan for each NHS area by the beginning of May.

3. POSITION IN AYRSHIRE AND ARRAN

- 3.1 Ayrshire and Arran has the second highest number of delayed discharges across Scotland with East Ayrshire having the highest number of delayed discharges in Ayrshire at this time.
- 3.2 Ayrshire and Arran will be allocated £1.5 million from the £20 million available, with 25% of this £375,000 being released immediately to place those waiting over a year in care settings in Ayrshire and Arran. Of this, East Ayrshire will be allocated up to £150,000 to accommodate 8 people waiting over a year and a further 4 waiting some considerable time. The remaining monies will be used for funding the other activities which prevent people having to be admitted to hospital unnecessarily or to be discharged speedily with supports.

4. EAST AYRSHIRE POSITION

- 4.1 The £150,000 is recurring, but can only be used to fund the care of individuals from hospital into care homes.
- 4.2 With the funding of these 12 people, there will remain 36 people in hospital places awaiting funding for care places and a further 12 people waiting in the community. The reduction in numbers relate to increased investment by Social Work Committee at the turn of the year. A considerable number of people are in the assessment phase in hospital with their long term care needs still to be determined.
- 4.3 Officers from the Social Work Department have met with partners from Health Agencies to begin to draw up longer term action plans for East Ayrshire to further address the issues of delayed discharges. This will include preventative measures to avoid hospital admissions as well as measures to facilitate early discharge.
- 4.4 The Minister has indicated that any area which continues to have high levels of delayed discharge will receive a visit comprising of a Local Authority Chief Executive and NHS Chair from an area achieving success. Their purpose will be to assist the areas struggling to address the long term issues.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Actual care costs, up to £150,000, has been allocated to East Ayrshire Council for 2002/03.
- 5.2 This money is recurring, but can only be used for care home placements, and must be in addition to existing budgets.

6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Council is required to address delayed discharge with partners in health.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 It is recommended that Committee:
- (i) request the Director of Educational and Social Services to submit the long term action plan which is to be submitted to the Minister in due course.
 - (ii) request the Director of Finance to amend the Social Work budget to reflect the increase in actual costs, up to £150,000 to meet the care needs of the people identified in section 4.1. This final cost for the initial target group will be determined once placements have been finalised.
 - (iii) otherwise note the content of the report.

John Mulgrew
Director of Educational and Social Services
21 March 2002

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LIST OF BACKGROUND REPORTS

1. Delayed Discharges in Scotland, Report to the Minister for Health and Community Care.

**For further information please contact:
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AGENDA