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# Carersnet

## Newsletter

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## CARERS AND HOSPITAL DISCHARGE –

**”Discharge from hospital : pathway, process and practice”,  
Department of Health, January 2003.**

Government plans to fine Local Authorities for delayed discharges have hit the headlines recently but on 27th January the Government quietly published a replacement for the Hospital Discharge Workbook of 1994. This appeared on the Internet along with a revised Bill amended by Parliament to include reference to Carers’ needs and Carers’ right to an assessment.

The new guidance implements the objective in the National Carers Strategy of ensuring Carers’ needs are acknowledged in Hospital Discharge procedures. It highlights concerns of Carers about current discharge procedures and looks for significant change.

A “key message” of the publication is to:

**“Recognise the important role Carers play and their own right for assessment and support”** and it says, **“The role of Carers must be taken into account in any discharge planning.”**

The guide states that Carers must be **“given a choice about undertaking a caring role”**. It highlights the need for **“engagement and communication with the Carers”** and providing Carers with information. Pre-admissions assessments should consider **“the Carers worries and concerns about how he or she is coping”**.

There will be ward based care co-ordinators who:



- **“will engage the Carer and make arrangements for carers assessments if appropriate”**
- **“make arrangements to see the Carer separately regarding their own needs”**
- **“Finalise the transfer/discharge arrangements 48 hours before discharge and confirm with patient and carer/family”**
- **Ensure that “the special needs of Young Carers are identified”.**

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The guidance also highlights the need to give Carers advice on moving and handling where appropriate and says, **“It is also important to include the Carer as part of the team as they will have expertise regarding the patient’s home environment.”**

## SHARING POWER AND CONTROL

The publication states: **“The power and control exhibited by many professions needs to change from one of professional dominance to one where power and control is shared. Professionals bring the professional and technical expertise, patients and carers bring their individual experience, expertise and aspiration.”**

## LOCAL PROCEDURES AND TRAINING

The Guidance requires consultation with all stakeholders (including carers’ organisations) regarding the development of new inter-agency hospital discharge procedures.

It also requires an inter-agency training programme. The draft Carers Strategies which are out for consultation refer to updating the award winning *Hospital Discharge and Resource Training Pack* published by the West Surrey Joint Training Group. This is now in hand.

Copies of the new guidelines can be downloaded from the front page of Carersnet – [www.carersnet.org.uk](http://www.carersnet.org.uk). The full document is 127 pages long and so the County Carers Strategy Group have arranged to make some copies which are available on request (individual copies only) – telephone 0208 541 8737 or for larger orders write to:



Department of Health (Publications)  
PO Box 777  
London SE1 6XH

[www.carersnet.org.uk](http://www.carersnet.org.uk)