



VIRTUAL CARERS MEETING 17TH FEBRUARY 2010

MINUTES

Name of meeting	VIRTUAL CARERS MEETING
Date meeting held	17th February 2010
Where meeting held	Virtual Meeting
Present	Jane Thornton, Brian Askew, Janice Clark, Debbie Hustings, Sam Soui, Ron Critcher, Margaret Lodge
Apologies	none

No.	TIME	AGENDA ITEM	FROM	ACTION/NOTES	BY WHOM	DATE FOR COMPLETION
1		Hospital Discharge Background		The meeting revolved around issues Carers had around hospital discharge. In January 2003 the Department of Health produced a guidance document 'Discharge from Hospital: Pathway, process and practice'. This guidance replaced the Hospital Discharge Workbook of 1994. The new guidance implemented the 1999 National Carers Strategy commitment of ensuring Carers needs are acknowledged in hospital discharge procedures. The guidance highlighted concerns of Carers about discharge procedures and looked for significant change. The key part of the guidance was to 'Recognise the important role Carers play and their own right for assessment and support		

				and it said' The role of Carers must be taken into account in any discharge planning. The guide stated that Carers must be ' given a choice about undertaking a caring role'. It highlighted the need for engagement and communication with Carers. The guide also highlighted for Carers to share power and control with everyone else involved including patient and professionals. There were also a number of other major recommendations.		
2				In the latest updated Carers Strategy 'Carers at the Heart of 21 st Century Families and Communities' it highlights that Carers should be partners and experts in care. The document also states that Carers should be central in all care planning from diagnosis to discharge and beyond. A key fact to this is providing Carers with information relevant to the Care and needs of the people they support. "Our Health Our Care Our Say" made a commitment to improve the access to information for everyone with a long term condition and their carers through the introduction of information prescriptions. But after all this is it getting better? The virtual group discussed this topic and produced fresh ideas and issues they have around hospital discharge.		
3		Meeting Notes		One member told the group that they had set up a hospital discharge process for older people at a hospital. The member explained how she would see the patients while they were on a ward then would then go to the patients home with a physiotherapist or a Occupational Therapist to see if the patient would manage when they got back home, and would liaise with other services to get adaptations put into the home. Once everything had been set up they would then discharge the patient. The member told the group upon her retirement she was told that this way of working had been useless and did not work. This method of working also produced a follow up visit within a couple of days of discharge to check on the person who had been discharged and the Carer. Members of the group were		

			<p>appalled at the comment that it was 'useless' and it was agreed it should be something that should be reinstated. One member stated that when she looked after someone who was a relative she did not live with, the discharge process did not recognise her as a Carer and was left out of the loop and this is dangerous for patients and Carers.</p> <p>The group in general felt this described role was vital to delivering a good discharge process. Guildford and Waverley has someone based in a surgery who is a health visitor-who provides a similar service. This person gets actively involved with discharges and is informed when one of the patients from her surgery is discharged. One of the main problems is it is felt that hospital clinical team and ward staff do not recognise carers and are not passing on information etc.</p> <p>It was felt that although people make complaints about this issue nothing moves on. The group was told that the flow of information from hospital to GP's is not very good.</p> <p>One member informed the meeting that issues around hospital discharge are not only about older people but cut across the general population of all ages.</p> <p>The group was concerned at the lack of information which is passed between hospital and GP and was a worrying factor in the issue of support for people who were discharged and those who care for them. A member told the group there now was a roll out of secure email and hopefully this would resolve some issues. However it needs someone with that responsibility to make sure that information is sent to the relevant agencies.</p> <p>It was felt that Carers do need to know what their rights are around hospital discharge.</p> <p>There are major issues around people with learning difficulties being discharged from hospital.</p>		
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Completed by:	Ron Critcher				
Circulated to:	Virtual Surrey Group				

Date of next meeting	12 th May 2010 7pm
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