



**DELAYED TRANSFERS OF
CARE FROM HOSPITAL**

**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL
LOCAL COMMITTEE (GUILDFORD)
21st July 2005**

KEY ISSUE: Progress report on the current position for the delayed transfers of care from acute hospital, setting out the partnership working that has reduced the number of instances to a negligible level.

SUMMARY: In previous years there were difficulties over enabling people who were ready to move from hospital to either return home or to other forms of care. From 2002, Surrey County Council has led an effective partnership that has reduced this to a position where there are currently no cases of delayed transfers of care in the county.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Committee is asked to:

- (i) note the progress made by SCC Adults & Community Care Service and partners in addressing this issue.
- (ii) comment on any further actions needed to support this area of activity.

1. INTRODUCTION and BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This report has been brought on the request from Cllr David Davis that progress on this issue be reported to the Local Committee.
- 1.2 The issue of delayed transfers of care from hospital has been a national problem for a number of years. It usually affects (mainly) older patients occupying hospital beds who have been assessed as ready to leave hospital, but are unable to do so for a range of reasons.
- 1.3 The reasons for this delay are varied and complex and may be to do with alternative arrangements not being in place, relatives or carers needing additional support or demands on the system overloading what is available in the community.
- 1.4 The situation in Surrey in 2002 was that an average of 200 people were thus affected at any one time in the county. The newly formed Adults & Community Care Service, anticipated the future requirement from central government that in future delayed transfers would lead to a “fine” from social services budgets for those instances where there are social care reasons for the delay.

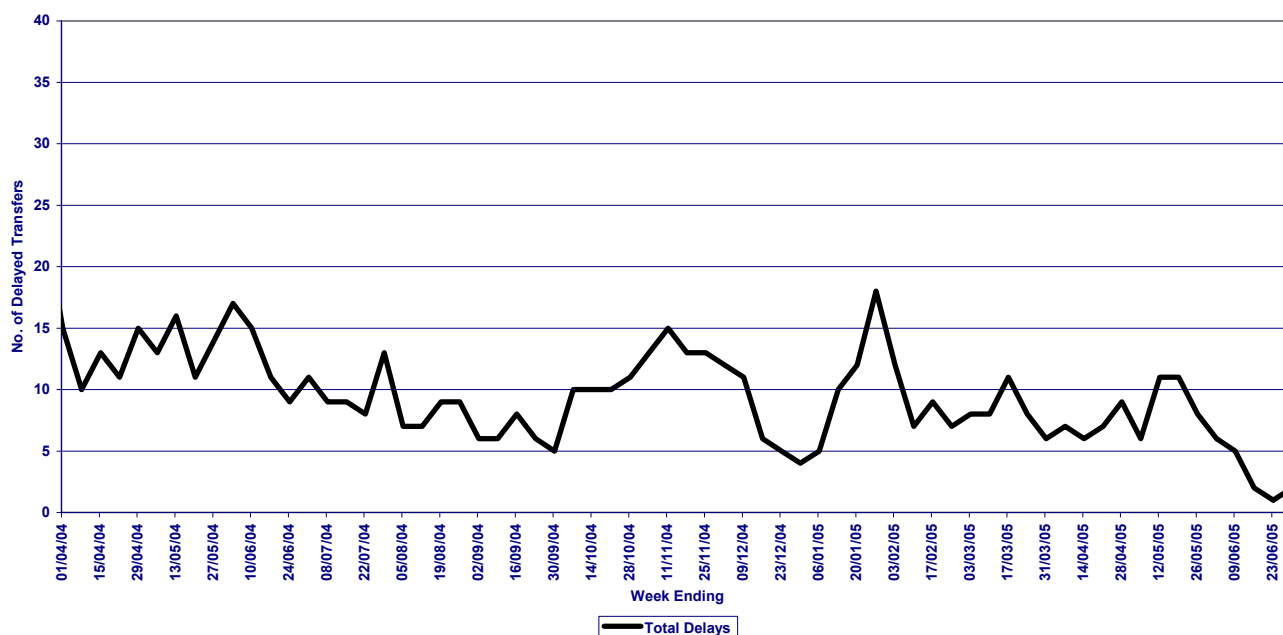
2. ANALYSIS AND COMMENTARY

- 2.1 This pre-emptive work brought together Adult Services, health services (both the Royal Surrey County Hospital and Guildford & Waverley PCT) and borough housing & community care services. A clear purpose was mapped out to ensure that returning patients from hospital to appropriate care in the community was the clear goal. Although there may be other reasons for delayed transfers, social care reasons were very much the province of SCC Adult Services and in order to avoid fines in the future, this has been a strong target for the service.
- 2.2 The partnership working was focussed on improving assessment and discharge systems, while at the same time extending the range and capacity of community based support services provided on a partnership basis by SCC, the PCT, the Royal Surrey County Hospital (RSCH) and Guildford Borough Council (GBC) Housing & Community Care Service.
- 2.3 A number of innovative projects have been established in Guildford that have provided modern, flexible support to ensure that patients can be transferred to intermediate care, as well as to home based support when ready to do so. These other supports have included the re-opening of the Redwood home in Merrow and the development of a range of supports at Dray Court.
- 2.4 By 2003, the average number of delayed transfers was down to 122 in the county, with an average for Guildford & Waverley of approximately 40 at any one time. The partnership of agencies was not complacent at this point, not least because the prospect of fines kept them focussed on the task!

- 2.5 The table below shows the picture for the RSCH until the end of June 2005, where the reason for delay is a social care one. However, it is very pleasing to record that as of 11th July 2005 there is now not one case of delayed transfer in the whole of Surrey for social care reasons.
- 2.6 This success brings no grounds for complacency as the picture could fluctuate from week to week and only by the agencies continuing to work together will this effective working be sustained for the benefit of patients.

**Total Patients Delayed in Acute Hospitals by Responsibility
Royal Surrey County Hospital NHS Trust**

Data Source: Delayed Transfers Database



3 GBC SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORT

- 3.1 During 2004, GBC’s Housing Health & Safety Committee conducted a scrutiny investigation into the issue of delayed transfers of care and the role of GBC in alleviating the problem. That investigation reported in March 2005 and produced 18 recommendations largely addressed to GBC, with specific recommendations addressed to SCC and health partners.
- 3.2 That investigation and report is seen as helpful in furthering thinking and planning for future partnership working, in particular. Slightly disappointingly, the investigation has not recorded the progress that has culminated in the outcomes cited, for example, in paragraphs 1.4; 2.4 & 2.5 of this report. The evidence of partnership working to purposefully address the issue of delayed transfers of care pre-dated the GBC investigation and the effective outcomes mentioned in paragraph 2.5 are being delivered by the agencies in any event.
- 3.3 Of the 18 recommendations in the GBC report, 8 were addressed to SCC and Adults & Community Care Service has responded in detail to these.

The expectation from SCC is that, regardless, the agencies will continue to work cooperatively and productively on this and other issues.

Report by: Dave Johnson

LEAD/CONTACT OFFICER: Dave Johnson, Area Director, South West

TELEPHONE NUMBER: 01483 517301

BACKGROUND PAPERS: SCC Adults & Community Care Select Committee "Performance & Budget 2005/6 and beyond" – 14th July 2005

GBC Housing, Health & Safety Scrutiny Committee Study Group report - March 2005
