

# Healthwatch Surrey Report On Communicating Information Through The Hospital Discharge Journey

1 March 2018

## Background

Patient experience of hospital discharge is a priority area for Healthwatch Surrey. We often hear from people about the need for better information and communication on the discharge process, particularly from older people.

National guidance highlights the importance of good communication in successful discharge, particularly for those people who require additional care and support.

We wanted to find out how we are doing in Surrey. We spoke in depth to almost 60 older people, both in hospital and after discharge.

## What we found

People told us how important it is to have clear information presented in the right way at the right time, to help them absorb and remember it, and in a way that can be shared with families/carers where appropriate. Arrangements for transport home, knowing if there's food in the house, and knowing about plans and support available after discharge were particularly important. Having good information about what medication to take was also key. We heard some examples of good practice, but also cases where people told us the basics had gone wrong.

If people are to be empowered to look after their own health, they and their families need the right information to enable them to do this.

## The Health and Wellbeing Board are invited to review the insight from people in Healthwatch Surrey's report and consider:

- How can the system work together, across all Surrey STPs, to ensure good information and communication is delivered consistently?
- How can the pressure to discharge people be balanced by the need to ensure individual needs are met, and that patients are at the heart of the process?

*"There are two sides. The medical and then everything else. They know the medical stuff. But what are my risks in day to day life?....How careful have I got to be? What can I do and not do...?"*

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**Sources/background papers:**

Annex 1 – “It’s Difficult to know what to ask - Communicating information throughout the hospital discharge journey, January 2018