

NIHR Greater Manchester PSTRC

## Plain English Publication Summary

Publication: [Improving Mental Health Care Transitions through Information Capture during Admission to Inpatient Mental Health Services: A Quality Improvement Study](#)

### Publication details (Vancouver format)

Tyler N, Wright N, Gregoriou K, Waring J. Improving Mental Health Care Transitions through Information Capture during Admission to Inpatient Mental Health Services: A Quality Improvement Study. BMC Health Services Research.

### What are the most important findings/conclusions in this paper? Why are they important?

Social workers, community mental health teams, and crisis teams provide important information when a patient is admitted to a mental health ward. Improving the quality of the information collected by the wards during admission could help to make discharge quicker and easier.

We developed ten categories of information to be recorded in a form that can be used with existing systems in hospitals. When we started testing the form in mental health wards, we noticed some difficulties in how teams work together that will need to be considered if the form is going to be used more widely.

### What did you do?

A researcher spent 145 hours working on three wards within a UK NHS trust. She hosted two workshops with staff to develop the form and then watched staff using it in day-to-day practice. Interviews took place with 45 members of staff during their working day to talk about how well the form works and how it could be improved. The interviews were analysed, along with the researcher's notes from her observations, in order to find key themes.

**Why did you conduct this research?**

Although researchers have developed 'work packages' to improve the transfer between mental health wards and community health teams, not all of them have worked. Guidelines say that discharge planning should begin when a patient is admitted to hospital, but in reality this does not always happen. To help healthcare professionals start discharge planning at admission, we wanted to develop a new form that would collect important information about the patient, which could make their discharge easier and quicker.

**What was known before your paper was published?**

Delayed discharge is a problem in mental health services. Research shows that 14% of UK mental health patients experience a delayed discharge. This is where the patient is viewed as well enough to leave hospital, but they are unable to because of problems providing community care once they leave. Delayed discharge is expensive for healthcare organisations, and also causes issues for patients.

In the past, research has focused on finding ways to reduce readmission or suicide/self-harm. Although we know that improving how information is shared between services is important to patients, very few research studies have focused on this. Research about patient discharge shows that if information isn't shared properly and there isn't co-ordination between health and social care professionals, this can cause quality and safety issues for patients.

**What is next? What is the potential impact of the work in this paper? What will change as a result of this paper (or the study it describes)?**

We are now working on using the form to develop more ways to improve admissions and discharges from mental health services. This work was done in a single NHS trust, so we have asked healthcare professionals from other NHS trusts for their opinions, to see if the form would work in other hospitals.

**Does this paper link in to a particular study / project? If so, please summarise the study and explain how this paper has improved understanding, or will move the study forward.**

This work is part of the Safer Mental Health Care Transitions project within the NIHR GM PSTRC. Recording information during admission to mental health hospitals will form part of a small research trial in 2022. The trial will test whether a number of changes to communication and information sharing between services will improve quality and safety of care for patients.