

Report to: Health and Wellbeing Board

Date: 22 October 2014

Report of: Suzanne Hilton, Chief Executive,
Age UK

Report No:

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Report Title: **New Home from Hospital Service for People Over 65 in Bolton**

Non Confidential:

This report does **not** contain information which warrants its consideration in the absence of the press or members of the public

Purpose:

To inform the Health and Wellbeing Board on a new service to support older people who live alone or who are the main carer of another when they come out of hospital after a stay on the wards or a trip to A&E.

Recommendations:

The Health and Wellbeing Board are recommended to support Age UK Bolton and its partners in securing the scale up and sustainability of the service, subject to them evidencing successful outcomes for both commissioners and older people in Bolton.

Decision:

**Background
Doc(s):**

New Home from Hospital Service for People Over 65 in Bolton

Age UK Bolton is delighted to announce a new service to support older people who live alone or who are the main carer of another when they come out of hospital after a stay on the wards or a trip to A&E.

The service to be launched this winter in partnership with Bolton NHS Foundation Trust (FT) Hospital, is aimed at supporting older people make a safe discharge from hospital and provide them with the practical and emotional support they need to recover at home.

Going into hospital can be an anxious time at any age but for many older people coming home can be as, if not, more worrying. Age UK Bolton's team of dedicated staff and volunteers will ensure that they are not left to struggle and cope alone. The transitional period of recovery at home following a stay in hospital can leave older people feeling at their most vulnerable and many are at risk of being readmitted or needing a crisis intervention from the Council's adult care services. For many this period is one of isolation which leaves people wondering when they will next see a visitor or a friendly face. Research shows that loneliness is as bad for our health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day and can contribute to a range of health problems and certainly hinders recovery.

Older people, more than any other age group, rely on acute and GP services with two thirds of all people admitted to hospital being over 65. Older people tend to stay in hospital for longer and often return again within days or weeks. 80% of Delayed Transfers of Care cases are people over 70. In the last 10 years emergency readmissions within 30 days of a visit to A&E or a period as an inpatient have increased by 88%. This causes untold distress for those individuals, worry for their family and friends and costs the NHS £2.2 billion a year. With health and social care services stretched to breaking point and a growing elderly population this is not a sustainable situation.

Bolton FT Hospital is working with Age UK Bolton and Senior Solutions with the support of Bolton Council Adult Social Care Services and other healthcare professionals to: identify those people aged over 65 in need of help to facilitate a safe discharge; identify those at risk of readmission or crisis care interventions and put together and deliver a co-ordinated and tailored package of support. The team who will be based in the hospital will provide emotional and practical support including making sure that the home is safe and warm, that there is a sufficient supply of basic food stuffs, making and clearing away light snacks, organising home delivery of ready-meals, collecting prescriptions, checking that people are keeping up their fluid in-take and taking their medication, encouragement to practice physiotherapy or O.T. prescribed exercises; help to attend follow-up medical appointments; deal with a backlog of mail accumulated during a stay in hospital or help with writing letters; signposting and referral to and liaison with other agencies;

encouragement with everyday tasks to regain independence and confidence and, most importantly, offer care (but not personal care), companionship and hand-holding to encourage and support recovery.

Chief Executive, Suzanne Hilton said “The best way that I can describe the service is that we will step in to offer the kind of practical support, encouragement and companionship that a family member, close friend or good neighbour would, but for those people who are not fortunate to have such a network close by. Once people make a safe recovery we will be pleased to introduce them to any of our other services that might help them adjust to new challenges and to make the most of their later life. This might be receiving a regular “Befriending” visitor, coming along to an afternoon tea, joining one of our popular creative pastimes, dance and fitness or learning activities or using our Handyman to help maintain their home and garden if this is no longer easy for them to keep on top of”.

Age UK Bolton is an independent registered local charity that has been working tirelessly with, for and on behalf of older people across the town since 1947. We offer a varied programme of services and activities designed to keep those of us aged over 50 as mentally, physically and socially active as possible in order to enjoy a safe and fulfilling later life.

These services include: information and advice; “Handyman”; Befriending to tackle loneliness and isolation; lunch & leisure clubs and a range of learning opportunities, creative activities and dance and exercise classes. These are offered in our purpose built centre in Farnworth as well as number of community venues across the borough.

Recommendation

The Health and Wellbeing Board are recommended to support Age UK Bolton and its partners in securing the scale up and sustainability of the service, subject to them evidencing successful outcomes for both commissioners and older people in Bolton.