

Dear Colleagues,

**Please disseminate the below message to staff within your teams.**

The Trust is launching a campaign with Foundation Group partners', George Eliot Hospital NHS Trust, Worcester Acute Hospitals NHS Trust and Wye Valley NHS Trust, which will focus on the importance of patients being discharged from hospital as soon as they are medically fit.

Research highlights that being in familiar surroundings aids recovery. Therefore, the campaign highlights how keeping a patient (particularly the elderly) in

hospital for longer than necessary can cause serious harm. Recovering at home / a person's place of residence supports improved health and wellbeing outcomes.



- Up to 60% of older patients experience functional decline after hospitalisation.
- If you are over 80, 10 days of bed rest equals 10 years of muscle aging.
- Hospital inactivity = accelerated bone loss, malnutrition, delirium, sensory deprivation, and incontinence.
- Vulnerable adults can lose as much as 5% muscle strength per day to hospital acquired deconditioning.

We are therefore strongly encouraging you to work collaboratively with colleagues and work as multi-disciplinary teams to ensure patients are discharged as soon as they are medically fit - to enable them to recover well in their home environment. Our services are designed to treat the acute phase of illness or injury, not for recovery and recuperation.

Ensuring that patients are given the chance to continue their lives at home is vital for their long-term wellbeing outcomes. There is a general misconception that hospital is the best place for a patient to

recover from an illness or health condition. This is not true. Hospitals are very busy, unfamiliar environments, which can cause confusion, disorientation and can lead to deconditioning.

To reduce resistance to leaving the hospital setting as a result of the above misconception, please can we encourage you to have conversations with patients (and their relatives) as early as possible during their hospital care / treatment. Set expectations of what criteria a patient needs to meet to be discharged from hospital and the support available in the community to assist them to recover at home. Sometimes, patients' families can help their loved one to recover, but highlight they won't be on their own to do this as there's a wide range of support available.

Also, have discussions with relatives about how they can assist us to get their loved ones back to the comfort of their home as soon as possible and how they can help them to settle in their place of residence after a hospital stay. Ask them bring in clean clothes, provide transport home and make sure they have food and a warm home to return to.

For more information about the 'There's no place like home' campaign and the services to support patients and their relatives following hospital discharge visit: <https://www.swft.nhs.uk/looking-after-me/There-s-no-place-like-home>.

Thank you for your support with the campaign and assisting patients to recover well in the right environment.

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Chief Nursing Officer

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