

**Re: Information for Patients/Relatives in NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde Hospitals –  
October 2022**

Dear Patient / Relative,

We are writing to you as someone who is currently receiving care within one of our hospitals. We wish to explain the pressures the NHS is currently under and what this might mean for you.

Across our acute hospital sites there has been an increase in the number of people who are medically fit for discharge but their discharge is delayed whilst awaiting either a care at home package or a place in a Care Home. Our acute hospitals are designed for people who need urgent medical treatment or surgery. When there are delays in discharging patients there are fewer beds available for patients who require urgent treatment. This can also lead to long waits in crowded emergency departments, ambulance service delays and cancelled operations.

As importantly, we know from research evidence that staying in hospital longer than needed can impair mobility, fitness and strength, making it harder to regain independence. A hospital is not the suitable or appropriate environment for someone who no longer needs acute medical care.

A great deal of activity is already underway to ensure when patients are well enough to go home or to a homely setting they are discharged safely, and in good time.

As we plan for discharge our teams will work with you and your family to look at options for you going home, home with support or to a care home setting. However at this challenging time, other options for your ongoing care may need to be considered as we need to ensure that someone is not occupying a hospital bed when they no longer need hospital care.

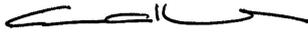
The list below outlines what may happen once you no longer require acute hospital care:

- 1 You may be transferred to another location for some ongoing care or rehabilitation. This transfer could be to any location within NMSGC.
- 2 You might need social care support in order to be discharged safely back to your home. Following an assessment of your needs, our teams will work with you to ensure you have the right level of care for you. Current pressures mean there are challenges in meeting care needs within the community. If that is the case, we would ask you to be as flexible as possible in order to support discharge to an appropriate setting, whether that be discharge with care at home or discharge to a care home for a short while, whilst awaiting your care at home package to be available.
- 3 It may be that an assessment of your needs identifies that a care home will offer you the most suitable long-term care. In ordinary circumstances we would want you to be able to move directly to your first choice of care home. However, it is important when considering care homes, you consider ones that have availability that times well with your expected discharge date. If that is not your first choice of care home, we will work with you to ensure a transfer to your first choice location when a vacancy arises.
4. Following assessment you may wish to leave hospital with your family and be supported by them in your own home or within their home. We can assist by providing phone assistance/advice from our community teams.

In summary, it is best to be cared for in an environment and with support that is most appropriate to meet your individual needs. We are grateful for your support and understanding. These are challenging times and we must all do our best to make sure that our hospitals can provide the urgent care for those who need it.

If you have any questions, please discuss them with your Consultant or the Ward Senior Charge Nurse.

Yours sincerely



**Professor Angela Wallace**  
**Executive Nurse Director**



**Dr Jennifer Armstrong**  
**Medical Director**



**Mr William Edwards**  
**Chief Operating Officer**