**Royal Cornwall Hospital Trust-Discharge Support – ‘Going Home Bags & Volunteer Telephone follow up**

**Overview**

This initiative arose from the Covid 19 pandemic review of services which led to a member of staff developing a Discharge Basics pack (nutritional groceries plus toilet rolls) - this was renamed a ‘Going Home Bag in late 2020- to be provided as a gift to frail, elderly, vulnerable patients at the point of discharge. The wards identified the appropriate patients, and completed a request form, or simply phoned through a request. Funding was generously provided by RCHT Hospital Charity .

Monday-Friday, packs are made up by volunteers and delivered to the wards . At weekends packs are ordered and distributed via the site office. All packs contain a compliment slip which says a volunteer would call just to say ‘Hello’ in a few days.

 Experienced volunteers based at home, are provided with patient contact details of those who had been gifted a going home and make a one-off phone call. The patients who are successfully contacted are pleased (even delighted) to receive a call. For them, this contact from the hospital reinforces the care and concern that the hospital has for their patients. The Going Home Bags and follow on calls have been well received. Comments include;

**“it made all the difference to my discharge home” “made coming home a lot easier”**

**“that was really good thanks, very grateful for the phone call and the pack”**

**“the pack was really really welcome as I went home later in the day”**

**“thank you so much for the phone call and chat”**

Volunteers are aware of the services offered by other organisations such as Volunteer Cornwall (shopping, prescription collection etc) and will signpost as appropriate. If any medical concerns are raised, the patient is advised to contact their GP. On occasions where a concern has been flagged the volunteer will pass this to the voluntary services office and through to the safeguarding team. This process has been discussed and documented in accordance with Trust governance arrangements

To date we have distributed over 550 Going Home bags and made over 460 successful telephone calls. Our team of 15 follow up call volunteers are home based. Each has an NHS email to ensure patient information is sent securely and access to the IQUVIA database to record comments etc which is then accessible to to the wards for them to pass onto positive/negative comments to their team. We have a couple of volunteers making up and distributing the Bags as required on site. This is a fantastic project where patient impact can be assessed quickly and effectively and that information is fed back to the wards to improve the discharge experience.

This Discharge Support Project wholeheartedly embraces our Trust values demonstrating Brilliant Care Brilliant People, Brilliant Improvement and Brilliant Patient Communication.

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