

Upon Transferring Patients between Wards: *ensuring the effective handing over of information*

To ensure the effective handing over of information upon transferring a patient between wards, it is recommended to implement the following guidance, which uses the SBAR (Situation – Background – Assessment - Recommendation) quality and service improvement tool (NHS Institute for Innovation & Improvement).

This short practice guideline is issued as a practice guide for all ward staff, and relates to recent recommendations from a number of serious untoward incidents.

PRACTICE GUIDELINE

Remember: although you will need to read the patient's notes as soon as possible, a brief verbal handover of information is required in all transfers.

Situation

- Who is being transferred?
- Why is the person being transferred?
- Where are they being transferred from?
- How are they being transferred and who will escort them?
- How do they feel about being transferred?

Background

- Brief summary of the service user's history
- Is this their first presentation or are they known to services?
- Mental Health Act status – expiry date, leave status, appeal
- Risk history – risk to self/others, vulnerability, self neglect
- Drug or alcohol use
- Physical health care needs
- Social needs
- CMHT involvement, care co-ordinator

Assessment

- Current mental state and behaviour
- Current risk assessment, including details of most recent risk event/s
- Brief summary of the person's current care plan
- When did the person last receive medication?
- Issues re compliance, side effects or allergies
- Current leave status
- Immediate carer or family needs e.g. informing them of the transfer

Recommendations

- What are your recommendations for the priorities for the team you are handing over to?
- This may include the level of observation, medication use, staffing issues such as gender, court dates and/or risk issues – for example: special instructions if the person was to go AWOL etc...

Are you satisfied with the detail of the handover? If not, it is your professional responsibility to ensure that you ask for any additional information that you need or to seek clarity about the information provided.

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