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28 April 2021

Reference no.21220008

Dear Vanessa Fillis

Request for Information: Freedom of Information Act

Thank you for your email of 7th April making a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act. You requested the following information and the Trust is able to provide the information below in response:

Request:

I would like to request, under the freedom of information act, the following information for adult mental health services in Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust.

1. The number of nurses or support workers who support patients regarding their housing while they are inpatient in a mental health unit. These could be housing officers, housing support workers, special housing nurses, or similar professions that are specialised in housing support.

2. The protocol for discharging homeless patients or patients who face homelessness after their discharge. Please provide a document with the discharge policy or, if there is no document, please state what the protocol is.

3. The number of nurses or support workers who support mental health patients regarding their housing while they are in the community. These could be housing officers, housing support workers, special housing nurses, or similar professions that are specialised in housing support.

Response:

Buckinghamshire.

Please see attached flow diagram.

Aylesbury North CMHT and Chiltern South each have x 1 Housing Officer in post specialising in housing support. These are the only housing specific roles but all Care coordinators will become involved with housing related issues. As part of CPA and any s117 review the suitability of someone’s housing will be considered. It is also considered as part of any Care Act assessment and access to suitable accommodation is a Well-being outcome under the Care Act:

* If the current accommodation is not suitable or the person is of no fixed abode, the Care Co-ordinator / Social Worker will assess what suitable accommodation would look like and support the person to make those arrangements or make them on their behalf if necessary.
* If the person’s capacity to make decisions about accommodation is in question a capacity assessment and if necessary best interest processes and/or a Court of Protection application under the Mental Capacity Act will be followed.
* General Needs accommodation is applied for via Bucks Home Choice. The AMHT housing support workers are very familiar with this system and with the housing/homelessness rules and regulations and will support with this. A Homeless Pathway is in place to help OHFT staff assist people to access accommodation.
* If the person has a higher level of need and requires some kind of supported living service then a Care Act assessment will be completed by a Social Worker, considering any s117 needs if applicable, and follow processes to apply for accommodation plus care and support through the local authority. Buckinghamshire Council has a Placement Team who will source supported accommodation (also residential and nursing care) based on the assessment of the person’s needs. The Council has a block contract with a provider for individual flats with staff on site and will spot purchase shared supported accommodation or more specialist placements depending on need.
* Everyone in receipt of a supported living service will have a review at least annually where the suitability of their current accommodation, care and support is considered. If the person no longer needs that level of support they will be supported to step-down to a more independent setting.
* People who have accommodation but need support to maintain it may be supported through the provision of advice and guidance, the resources of the CMHT or through commissioned services which Social Workers can apply for and arrange through the local authority processes.

Oxfordshire:

1. The number of nurses or support workers who support patients regarding their housing while they are inpatient in a mental health unit. These could be housing officers, housing support workers, special housing nurses, or similar professions that are specialised in housing support.

- Inpatient Social Workers - 4.0WTE (covering 113 people/beds)

- Embedded housing workers (EHW, Connections FS) - 1.0WTE

- Senior Social Worker, Inpatient Social Work team - 1.0WTE

- Patient Flow Manager - 1.0WTE

- Embedded Housing Officer (City/District Councils) - 0.2 WTE

- Benefits for Better Mental Health (BBMH) support worker - 0.2 WTE

- Additionally, Oxford Health are in a formal partnership with 5 third sector providers - <http://omhp.org.uk/> . Mind and Response referrals coordinators attend weekly inpatient flow meeting in order to support and advise on housing options.

- We have weekly escalation meeting attended by senior clinical and operational managers who also support and advise on housing matters.

2. The protocol for discharging homeless patients or patients who face homelessness after their discharge. Please provide a document with the discharge policy or, if there is no document, please state what the protocol is.

We do not have a protocol document.

The protocol is:

- Person is identified as homeless at point of admission and homeless status indicated on 'Red to Green' dashboard

- Inpatient social worker commences social needs assessment within 72hrs of admission; duty to refer completed as part of social needs assessment

- Inpatient social worker involves EHW and Housing Officer. Housing register and any other housing / homelessness related applications are commenced.

- Referrals for MH supported living are made to Mind / Response, where indicated

- Referral to Connections 'step-down' house made in conjunction with clinical team re timing of discharge (Step Down House can be accessed with 1 or 2 days notice and depending on void situation - Step Down House is for people with identified accommodation option and is interim step until that accommodation is available - maximum LOS is 2 weeks)

- Priority applications made for people accessing Night Shelter or other homeless pathway hostels - this is done in order to avoid a person having to be identified/verified as sleeping rough in order to access Night Shelter / hostel accommodation

- OHFT attend homeless access panels on a regular basis to discuss and agree plans for individuals

- Expertise in relation to NRTPF is available

- Escalation processes in place for disputed / unresolved situations

3. The number of nurses or support workers who support mental health patients regarding their housing while they are in the community. These could be housing officers, housing support workers, special housing nurses, or similar professions that are specialised in housing support.

- We have locality based community mental health services which are comprised of multi-disciplinary teams, including Social Workers and OMHP third sector partners http://omhp.org.uk/. All service users under the care of community mental teams have access to professionals and support staff who can provide specialism in relation to housing support.

- Each team has a Connections FS embedded worker and Oxon Mind embedded worker

- OHFT mental health is an integrated health and social care organisation - across all teams we have 41.0WTE Social Work staff fulfilling statutory social care role within MH services. Social Workers are linked with housing officers in each locality area

If you are concerned with the service you have received in relation to your request and wish to make a complaint or request a review of our decision, you should write to me and I will ensure the decision is reviewed. The Trust will consider undertaking a review if requested to do so within 40 working days of the date the response is received by the applicant, and will apply discretion if a longer period of time has passed.

Should you wish to make a complaint as a result of the outcome of such a review, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) for a decision.

Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by the Trust for FoI Act matters.

The ICO can be contacted at:

The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF

Please contact me if there are any further queries.

Kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

Mark Underwood

Head of Information Governance