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Cyfarwyddwr Gwasanaethau Cymunedol
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Dyddiad/Date: 26 July 2011

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Eich Cyf/Your Ref.:

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Gofynnwch am/Please Ask For: Richard Warrilow
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Dear Ruth,

Dignified Care Hospital Review: Feedback and Written Notice requesting further information.

I can confirm that Merthyr Tydfil did contribute to the original response sent by Cwm Taf Health Board. In light of your comments that you did not receive correspondence from the Local Authority we are submitting a response directly to yourself which will also be incorporated into a joint response with both Rhondda Cynon Taff Local Authority and with Cwm Taf Health Board.

With regards to section 5: Too many older people are still not being discharged in an effective and timely manner we would like to make the following observations.

Within Merthyr Tydfil we operate a number of Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDT's) that are staffed by both Health and Local Authority workers. The members of these teams attend the wards in both of the hospitals which are based within Merthyr Tydfil (Prince Charles Hospital and St. Tydfil's) on a daily basis to facilitate the timely discharge of people.

We have jointly developed, with our Health colleagues, a Multi-Disciplinary Dementia Team consisting of Social workers, Community Psychiatric Nurses and a Consultant Psychologist which is located within St. Tydfil's Hospital where the Health Board psychiatric services are based. These services include assessment, therapies, respite and long term wards which ensure that people have access to the EMI services they need in an effective and timely manner.

Within Merthyr Tydfil we also operate a single point of Access for Adult Social Care services which means that all referrals go through the Intake Team to ensure consistency. The manager of the Intake Team attends a weekly multi-disciplinary discharge planning meeting with the Discharge Liaison Nurses and other health professionals. This meeting focuses on those people who have an anticipated date of discharge (ADD) within 10 to 15 days and ensures that staff and services are targeted at the right people at the right time. As a result, the number of bed days per patient in St. Tydfil's Hospital has been reduced.

The Local Authority has in place a weekly panel meeting for those people who need to go into a residential or nursing home setting upon discharge and the Health Board is represented on this panel by a member of its Discharge Liaison team. It allows panel members to monitor the person's process on a weekly basis right from them choosing a home through to discharge and this again ensures that people are discharged into a care setting in a timely manner.

The Local Authority has jointly developed a process to manage any potential Delayed Transfer's of Care (DToC) with the Health Board. On Census day, a senior manager from the Local Authority "Walks the Wards" with a Discharge Liaison Nurse. Together, they identify those patients who either are delayed or could become a delay and they are then able to take appropriate action to resolve any issues promptly. This coupled with all the above measures has resulted in DToC's for social care reasons in Merthyr Tydfil being consistently amongst the lowest in Wales.

In addition to the services above which focus on the local hospitals, we have a number of community based initiatives that have been or are being developed in consultation with the Health Board, the independent providers and third sector partners.

In terms of future demand the Local Authority has taken into account the projected growing demand for EMI residential accommodation and we are currently in the process of building two new purpose built homes. The homes are being designed specifically for people who require EMI accommodation.

In addition to the above a new Extra Care scheme is due to open early in 2012 and this will provide accommodation for older people and people with EMI needs. The show apartment will be open in September 2011 and we have already seen a great deal of interest in people wanting to visit the scheme.

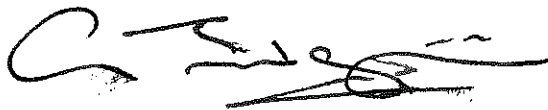
The Local Authority is also working closely with the Health Board on the development of the new "Health Park" and it is envisaged that a range of social services functions will relocate to the Park on its completion in 2012. These will include the Old Age Psychiatry services and the demonstration facilities for Telecare/ Telehealth. We have a Telecare/Telehealth scheme in Merthyr Tydfil and members of Cwm Taf HB sit on the management Board. Both hospital and community based nurses are able to order Telecare equipment without involving the Local Authority and again this both prevents hospital admissions and assists with timely discharges. The services for visual and hearing impairment will also be located within the demonstration facility at the Health Park.

In terms of the provision of equipment for patients and people in the community is managed through a Joint Equipment Service which is a partnership between Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Authorities and Cwm Taf Health Board. It is a fully integrated service and all appropriate health professionals are able to order equipment directly from the store. As part of this agreement, hospital based Occupational Therapists are able to order equipment to meet a patient's long term needs themselves, without having to refer to the Local Authority Community Occupational Therapists for a second assessment. This reduces the time taken to facilitate discharge when community equipment is needed.

Finally I would add that the Merthyr Tydfil re-ablement team is comprised of a mixture of Health and Local Authority staff which includes an Occupational Therapist, part time Physiotherapist, team coordinator and two support staff. The aim of the team is to provide brief (six week) multidisciplinary interventions that restore functional independence. The team is working increasingly closely with the Local Authority Initial Response service which responds to both hospital discharges and to preventing community admissions into hospital. The Re-ablement service and the Initial Response Service has been very successful in increasing or maintaining people's independence and this is an area that we will be focusing on in our continuing development of joint locality services with Cwm Taf HB and Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Authority.

If you require any further information then please do not hesitate to contact me

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Isingrini', with a stylized flourish at the end.

GIOVANNI ISINGRINI
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES