An evaluation of whether discharge plans meet patients' requirements: a survey

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Aim: We surveyed patients discharged home from two units within rehabilitation hospitals (Hampstead Rehabilitation Centre and St Margaret's Rehabilitation Hospital) to see if their discharge plans met their requirements, to identify factors predicting the success of discharge planning and see if perceptions of patients and a family member regarding the success of discharge planning were in agreement.

Methods: 40 patients were recruited and surveyed, via two interviews: one pre-discharge and the other 1-2 months post-discharge.

Results: Overall, discharge plans were successfully developed and implemented. Most items listed on participants' discharge plans were provided, required and met participants' requirements.
Examples of positive comments were:

- "Very happy, people good. Quite satisfied."
- "Pretty good, all went to plan. All there when I got home."
- "The best thing was they wouldn't discharge me until I had the equipment in place."

The success of discharge planning did not appear to be influenced by factors such as age, gender, length of stay, primary diagnosis, FIM scores or home address. Participants and a family member had a high level of agreement regarding the success of discharge planning.

Conclusions: AH staff play a pivotal role in discharge planning in the rehabilitation setting. The discharge plans of participants in this study accurately identified patients' needs, the plans identified were provided and met the requirements of participants.

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