Action Van Service – A Collaborative Approach to Patient Safety and Facilitating Discharge from Hospital

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**Aim of Service:**

- Action Van is an Occupational Therapy led HSE funded service, hosted and managed by The Royal Hospital Donnybrook (RHD) on behalf of the Steering Committee comprising of Community OT and Hospital OT Managers. The service employs 1.0 wte technician on a permanent basis.
- In order to expedite the safe and timely discharge from four hospitals, patients often require equipment and minor adaptations to their home environment.
- The Occupational Therapy Services within the four Hospitals in South Dublin (St. Vincent’s University Hospital, St. Michaels Hospital, St Columcille’s, The Royal Hospital Donnybrook) complete an assessment of each appropriate patient’s home environment and prescribe the installation of essential equipment or minor adaptations facilitating a safer and rapid discharge of the patient.

**Collaboration Stakeholders**

- St. Vincent’s University Hospital
- St. Michael’s Hospital
- St. Columcille’s Hospital
- The Royal Hospital Donnybrook

**Referral Criteria**

- This service was set up in 2005 and is primarily for patients over the age of 65 years of age who are medical card holders.
- To qualify to use the service patients must be in an acute or rehab hospital bed in one of the four hospitals and need equipment and rails to facilitate discharge home.
- The issuing of these essential pieces of equipment facilitates patients to be safe and independent in the most basic activities of daily living tasks. 81% of the equipment is still used daily by the patients 6 months following discharge.
- In 2015 the four participating hospitals had 313 patients who availed of the service. Community OT services in CHO6 also requested 148 collections and deliveries to facilitate equipment provision for people living at home. The Action Van Service completes over 35-40 installations/deliveries a month.

**Results**

- Timely and efficient discharges from acute and rehabilitation hospital beds.
- Reduced in-patient Length of Stay.
- Increased patient safety post discharge
- Reduced duplication of service between Hospital and Community OT.
- Reduced potential for further falls post discharge and re-admission to acute and rehabilitation hospital beds.
- Collaborate Integrated Working across 4 Hospitals and Community Services

**Conclusions**

- All Hospital and Community Manager feel the Action Van service is very successful and should be maintained and extended.
- All stakeholders confirm their satisfaction with the outcomes achieved for their patients and the long term benefits for them.
- The project represents good value for money, ensures safe and timely discharge of patients from the four hospitals and helps patients remain safely in their own homes for longer.
- The project should be extended as a key component of the new Integrated Discharge planning team in St Vincent’s University Hospital.