

IMPROVING TRANSFER BETWEEN HOSPITAL AND AGED CARE: November 2015

Significant improvements to care outcomes for older Australians can be achieved along with efficiency gains by improving the transfers between health and aged care services. These transfers can be complex and often can lead to a breakdown in the continuity of care and confusion around prescribed medications.

There is also confusion within some hospitals around the level of care a provider can offer since the removal of the high/low care distinction. Despite the removal of this distinction some facilities are able to offer “low care” services only.

Effective communication, information and cooperative continuing care are the key needs in resident transfers.

Despite additional resources and services in some states and territories to support the continuity of care for residents who reside in aged care facilities, the lack of a coordinated approach for resident transfers continues. ACSA supports the need for improved coordination of resident continuity of care following discharge from hospital.

An example of a guideline is one recently developed by the SA Government: *Policy Guideline Transfer of Individuals between Public Health Services and Residential Aged Care Services*.¹

ACSA's POSITION

- **The development of national guidelines to ensure better planned discharge allowing for continuity of care for residents transferring between hospitals and all aged care services.**
- **Development of an interim drug chart (which could be electronic) that could be used between hospitals and aged care for those states that do not currently have one.**
- **The PCeHR (My Health Care) to include access to Advance Care Directives at all times so that a person's end-of-life wishes can be respected 24 hours a day.**
- **Ensure that older people have access to acute care services where clinically appropriate regardless of the setting in which they reside.**

¹http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/3678388043cf9fed99b7bd1013b2c54b/Guideline_Transfer+of+Individuals_April2014.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CACHEID=3678388043cf9fed99b7bd1013b2c54b