



ISLINGTON

SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT

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To Whom it May Concern,

I write in my capacity as Team Manager to the Rapid Response Team (RRT) based within the A & E department of the Whittington Hospital. The aim of the team is to undertake urgent assessments on those patients who do not require admission to hospital and provide appropriate support to enable a safe discharge.

In March 2005 I was approached by Health Link to join a working group with the aim of improving the experiences of homeless people who presented at the hospital. I was very eager to become involved as it was becoming increasingly evident that we were not effectively meeting the needs of this group of people.

Since March 2005 the group have met every six weeks and throughout that time we have made significant progress in the formalising of a coherent referral pathway for rough sleepers and non – rough sleepers. These procedures set out to ensure that homeless people are provided with appropriate health and statutory homeless services within a single assessment framework. In addition links have been made with voluntary agencies and access to resources, for people with complex needs, has been improved.

Through our work with Health Link RRT have an improved working relationship with local agencies and a greater understanding of the issues associated with homelessness. There is also an improvement in working practices as the single assessment framework has enabled workers to work more efficiently and effectively.

It is evident that the work we have undertaken with Health Link has improved the experiences of those homeless patients presenting within the A & E department. Without the expertise, commitment and motivation of the group it is probable that longer-term improvements will not be made.

I therefore fully support and value the work of Health Link and look forward to continuing to improve the way in which we respond to the health and social care needs of homeless people within the hospital

If you require additional information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Tracy Brown
Team Manager
Hospital Social Work Department