

# Fast Track Discharge

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Getting to Good: Fundamentals in Care

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**Abstract:** Opportunities for improvement were identified in the Fast Track patient pathway (patients with a life expectancy of 3 months or less). A pilot was carried out to understand if the availability of a dedicated EoLC Occupational Therapist improved patient discharge.

## SMART Aim

To improve the Fast Track discharge process, increasing the number of patients that are seen by an Occupational Therapist within 24 hours by 50% by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022.

## Plan

The term 'fast-track' and associated pathway is designed for people nearing the end of their life, entering a terminal phase requiring care and support provision as soon as possible - usually within 48 (NHS, 2021). In SaTH the term Fast-Track is used to describe patients with a life expectancy of 3 months or less. Some patients are not getting fast track discharged in a timely fashion and not always to a place of their choice and to home. The team reviewed the current process using a Process Flow chart, identifying opportunities for improvement. Following a pilot carried out in December 2020- March 2021, the team were eager to trial the use of a dedicated Occupational Therapist for patients on the End-of-Life Care (EoLC) pathway to address some of the current wastes within the process.

## Do

Due to staffing challenges, the team were eager to pilot the dedicated EoLC Occupational Therapist, although recognised that this would not be possible over a long period of time. The team utilised the pre-Christmas Multi-Agency Discharge Event (MADE) held between the 14<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> of December 2022, focussing on getting EoLC patients 'home for Christmas'. A dedicated Occupational Therapist was made available on both RSH and PRH sites, to prioritise the fast-track discharge process.

## Study

- During the MADE, 10 patients were referred for EoLC Occupational Therapy provision.
- 80% of EoLC patients were seen within 24 hours of referral.
- In comparison, during this time period, patients seen using standard Occupational Therapy pathways had an average time on caseload of 7 days, and only 44% were seen within 24 hours.
- 8 bed days were lost during this week for EoLC patients seen, due to lack of available care packages and one patient experiencing a 1-day delay whilst awaiting equipment.

Data analysed as part of the EoLC Occupational Therapy Winter Scheme 2021 and MADE event winter 2022 concludes;

- 84% of patients on a dedicated EoLC Occupational Therapy pathway can be seen the same day of referral (within 12 hours)
- 94% of patients on a dedicated EoLC Occupational Therapy pathway can be seen within 24 hours.
- This fast response rate enables more timely access to specialist assessments; earlier identification of a patients wishes and needs and referrals on for specialist equipment and community support. The result is an Occupational Therapy referral to discharge rate of under 48hours, within the national target.

## Act

A business case will be written for additional funding to support the development of EoLC Occupational Therapy service. Further work improvement work will be carried out to improve the initial identification of Fast Track patients on the wards.