

How supported housing helps people transition from hospital care to home

Supported housing is a vital part of the housing system and plays a key role in providing a safe home for those leaving hospital care. It enables people who require assistance with aspects of daily life to still live as independently as possible. It relieves pressure on the NHS and social care.

A new NHF report to be published next month explores how the NHS and supported housing providers are working together to remove barriers to finding a safe home and support people leaving hospital at the right time for their recovery.

The research shows that addressing supported housing shortages could play a crucial role in reducing delays to hospital discharge and relieving pressure on our healthcare system.

- The average number of patients per week who had a hospital stay longer than 14 days and a delayed hospital discharge due to housing-related reasons has more than tripled since 2021, from 49 to 153 patients per week in 2024.
- In September 2024, 7,239 additional hospital bed days were used in mental health hospitals due to a lack of appropriate supported housing. This made up 17% of all delayed discharge days in September.

In September 2024, waiting for supported housing was the single largest reason for delayed discharges from mental health hospitals

Enough supported housing could generate the NHS cost savings in the region of £53m - £65m per year

How housing and health providers are tackling the issue

The case studies in this research feature innovative housing schemes that have helped reduce delays in hospital discharges. They show how supported housing can improve hospital discharge for the main groups of people affected by delays: people experiencing homelessness, older people, people with mental health problems and people with learning disabilities and autism.

Research shows that the schemes:

- Reduce costs, alleviate resource pressures, and prevent people staying in hospital longer than needed.
- Reduce repeated readmissions from those discharged when they did not have a home that met their needs, including those discharged to the streets.

- **Difficulties in securing long-term revenue funding and capital grant funding pose a barrier to the sustainable future of the schemes and their capacity to meet future demand.**
- **The lack of local affordable housing options affected schemes' ability to move people on from short-term supported housing when they were ready.**

How to enable people to leave hospital at the right time

To support people to leave hospital at the right time and enter safe and suitable housing the report recommends:

- Collaboration between Integrated Care Boards and housing providers, supported by a national strategic direction set by the government.
- Health and housing integrated into the long-term housing strategy and NHS 10 Year Plan.
- Greater capital investment in supported housing and long-term revenue funding for hospital discharge schemes via capital grants.
- Reinstating the £300m Housing Transformation Fund and strategic planning with longer term financial settlements for local authorities.

Find out more

- Join our online webinar: How can housing help the NHS with hospital discharge? 11 February 2025, 11am-12pm.
- Hear from NHF researchers and speakers from the health and housing sectors on the impact of housing-related delayed discharges from hospital and the role that supported housing can play in alleviating pressures.
- Email katie.hipkiss@housing.org.uk for more information.