

JOINT EVENT

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Discharge from hospital: A survey of transition to outpatient care

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Introduction: Despite a generally decreased mean time for hospital care in Sweden, an increasing length of stay has been highlighted among patients with long term care need.

Aim: Identifying challenges and potentials in the transition of patients between hospitals and primary care.

Method: Data of discharged patients were extracted from national registers and interviews were conducted with local authorities in a sample of nine out of 21 counties, and a systematic literature search was performed.

Results: A total of 11, 21, 823 persons were discharged from Swedish hospitals in 2014. Of all discharged patients 3, 34, 420 had further need of medical care and 2, 21, 221 had further need of social care. Among these, 53,763 patients needed both medical and social care. Of these, frail persons (primarily females 80 years or older) were 48%, who were readmitted to the hospital within 30 days. The main reported difficulties were: a decreasing number of beds in hospitals and nursing homes, lack of staff with proper education, problems in transfer of information between caregivers. Reported examples of adapted working methods initiated to promote a coherent health care were, local follow-up of patient data and focus on cooperation between caregivers, extensive initial home care after discharge, and outpatient care organized by both municipalities and county councils. The scientific literature showed contradictory results about the effects of single interventions at discharge. However, the number of readmissions to hospital may be reduced by combining several interventions before discharge and follow-up after discharge. No consistent effects on patients' perceived quality of life, well-being or satisfaction were reported.

Conclusion: As many frail patients are readmitted to hospitals, primary care may need new working methods. In addition, a new regulation on care coordinator for patients with extensive health care needs is introduced in 2018, which may help increase patient safety.

Biography

Elizabeth Ahsberg is currently a Researcher at the Swedish National Board of Health and Welfare. She has done her graduation and PhD in the year 1998 from Stockholm University. She has published several research papers in reputed journals and has presented her research studies in national, regional, and international conferences.

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