

2017-07-20

Improving hospital discharge arrangements for people who are homeless: A realist synthesis of the intermediate care literature

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<http://hdl.handle.net/10026.1/9834>

10.1111/hsc.12474

Health and Social Care in the Community

Wiley

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Figure 2: Working definition of intermediate care used for screening sources of evidence (Pearson et al., 2015)

Purpose: Supports transition (e.g. hospital to home); occurs at a critical point (i.e. on the cusp of the shift from independence to dependence, at the point of acquisition of a chronic illness or disability, or at the intersection of illness and frailty)

Functions: A bridge between (i) locations; (ii) health or social care sectors (or within these sectors); (iii) health states. Views people holistically, as individuals in a social setting . Time-limited (e.g. 72 hours; 2 weeks; 6 weeks)

Structure: Designs and embeds new routes through services (which enhance sensitivity to needs and wishes of service users)

Content: Treatment or therapy (to increase strength, confidence and/or functional abilities); Psychological, practical and social support; Support/training to develop skills and strategies