

(1) The aims and objectives of the establishment

Aims and Objectives

HealthLinc House is registered as an independent hospital, and provides high quality care, treatment and structured rehabilitation for thirty-nine patients who are either liable or not liable to be detained under certain sections of the Mental Health Act (1983).

Admission Criteria:

We provide hospital services for patients of either sex requiring care, accommodation and treatment who:-

- have a diagnosis of Learning Disability
- have behavioural difficulties which compromise their physical or psychological wellbeing or that of others
- may or may not have additional mental health needs
- require care and ongoing (re)habilitation in a hospital facility
- have been identified by their referring agency as being in need of ongoing care and (re)habilitation
- are liable or not liable to be detained under the Mental Health Act 1983
- are aged between 18 years and 65 years

Our aim is to work in partnership with the public sector and identified stakeholders to provide highly specialised and personalised packages of care based on individual assessments and care programmes to enhance the lives and independence of our patients.

Our Person Centred Planning Approach ensures all patients are treated as individuals with individual needs and requiring individual care. Our goal is to promote independence and to ensure that privacy and dignity are maintained. We promote an holistic approach to care where physical, social, psychological, spiritual, cultural and educational needs are given equal importance and appropriate care plans and interventions are put into place to meet those needs. We promote a safe and therapeutic environment where staff understand the need for a patient to be treated as an individual and with respect.

All patients will be subject to an assessment process prior to their admission

Assessments are undertaken by senior members of the clinical team and discussed by the referral panel, comprising the Medical Director, Clinical Director and Hospital Manager, who agree the individual's suitability, or otherwise, to be offered a placement. The referring agency is informed, in writing, of the panel's decision and it retains responsibility for notifying the patient accordingly.

The individual referred, their relatives and members of their current care team are encouraged to visit the hospital to assist them in their decision making process.

The hospital accommodates 39 patients in single rooms in 13 small living units (apartments), which will each accommodate between one and six individuals and one 2 bedded bungalow.

HealthLinc House provides individual packages of care for people with learning disabilities who have mental health needs and may exhibit challenging behaviour.

HealthLinc House promotes the principles of “an ordinary life”. We encourage community presence and participation, increased independence and empowerment and also create opportunities to develop relationships and friendships, ensuring individual needs are met in a safe and empathetic environment.

Everyone living at HealthLinc House is given the opportunity to develop personally and experience increasing opportunities and capabilities. We support patients to exercise choice in making both major life and day-to-day decisions. Meaningful activity is a key element in a fulfilled life; patients are encouraged and supported to participate in a variety of activities both on-site and in the wider community. These typically include further education, work and college placements, social skills development, horse riding, swimming, nature preservation and horticulture.

Packages of care are developed based on individual assessments and are subject to regular review as part of our robust CPA process.

The management of the hospital includes a clear clinical governance structure supported by the use of clinical audit.

Facilities

Set in its own private mature grounds of almost 4 acres, the facilities are bordered by rolling countryside giving an air of peaceful tranquillity and well being.

With the benefit of the proximity to the centre of Welton, a busy village with a thriving community atmosphere, local outings include coffee trips and visits to shops as well as use of the nearby golf course and cycle rides in the local countryside and villages. Amongst the on-site facilities are a craft workshop, dedicated day-activity unit, multi-sensory room, gymnasium, horticulture area, beauty therapy room, and music and movement sessions. Tutors from local colleges also visit to facilitate courses ranging from Information Technology, to Literacy and Numeracy.

The accommodation offers domestic style living within the following configuration of single sex apartments:

Four one-bedded apartments,
One two-bedded apartment,
Four three-bedded apartments,
Two four-bedded apartments,
One five-bedded apartment and
One six-bedded apartment.

All bedrooms are single with a range of en-suite facilities and are furnished to a high standard.

In addition, there is a two bedded, detached bungalow within the grounds, offering the opportunity of continuing rehabilitation in a more independent environment.

Every effort has been made in the building design to ensure that the individual bedrooms are comfortable and safe. The bedroom design also includes a call-point for the hospital nurse call system.

We encourage patients to bring with them personal belongings to personalise their room as long as such items do not pose a health and safety risk to staff, fellow patients and visitors. All personal possessions brought into the hospital must comply with Health and Safety and Fire Regulations and will be checked on admission by the hospital staff.

Each apartment offers kitchen, bathroom, dining room and sitting room facilities allowing integrated small group living where the individual right to privacy, independence, choice and dignity are respected and encouraged. Within the larger complex there are custom-built day activity units which are independently staffed, together with consulting rooms and a fully equipped conference facility.

The hospital has a range of on-site transport to facilitate home visits and encourage community access. Outings to seaside resorts and holiday parks are regularly organised for many of our patients, and day trips out embrace educational, cultural and leisure activities.

(2) The name and address of the registered provider and registered manager.

Registered Provider

HealthLinc Individual Care Ltd
Head Office
76 Ryland Road
Welton
Lincoln
LN2 3LZ

Telephone: 01673 860959
Fax: 01673 862736
Email: enquiries@healthlinc.co.uk

Registered Manager

Ms Donna Fleming
Hospital Manager
HealthLinc House Independent Hospital
Cliff Road
Welton
Lincoln
LN2 3JN

Telephone: 01673 862000
Fax: 01673 863200
Email: enquiries@healthlinc.co.uk

Responsible Individual

Mr George Blackoe
HealthLinc Individual Care Ltd
Head Office
76 Ryland Road
Welton
Lincoln
LN2 3LZ

Telephone: 01673 860959
Fax: 01673 862736
Email: enquiries@healthlinc.co.uk

(3) The relevant qualifications and experience of the registered provider and registered manager.

Registered Provider

HealthLinc Individual Care provides highly specialised, person centred care and support to individuals with learning disabilities and complex needs. Established in 1997, our philosophy is one of inclusion, empowerment and close partnership working, this ensures that the needs of the individual remain central to decision making whilst facilitating a wide range of views to inform this process.

The management teams at both organisation and hospital level are highly experienced and totally committed to ensuring the highest quality of service provision to the people entrusted to our care.

Registered Manager

Donna Fleming is the Hospital Manager of HealthLinc House Independent Hospital. A dual registered RMN / RNHM nurse, Donna has over twenty years experience in the care profession, and has developed and managed HealthLinc House since 1999. In order to achieve this, Donna has undertaken responsibility for staff recruitment, assessment of appropriate referrals, and development and implementation of appropriate documentation, policies and procedures.

In addition to nursing qualifications, Donna has obtained a number of other qualifications relevant to this post including; NVQ D32/33 assessor, C24/26 teaching, NEBOSH Health & Safety certificate.

(4) The number, relevant qualifications and experience of the staff working in the establishment.

The Registered Manager is supported by an extended multi-disciplinary team, which includes:

No. of posts	Job title	Qualifications
1	Medical Director	MB MCh BAO LRCPI LRCSI MRSPsych PgCHE PgCHRL
2	Sessional Consultant Psychiatrists	(MB BS DRCOG MRCS LRCP MRCPsych Dip.Med.Psy) (MB BS)
1	Sessional Consultant Psychologist	BA, MA, PhD, Doctorate in Clinical Psychology
4	Sessional Psychologist	Bsc(hons) Psychology Doctorate in Clinical Psychology Diploma in family therapy & Systemic practice
1	Deputy Manager	RNLD
1	Charge Nurse	RNLD
17	Registered Nurses	RNLD RMN RGN
10	Senior Care Assistants	NVQ 2, 3 & in-house training
97	Care Assistants	NVQ 2 & in-house training
1	Day Activity Co-ordinator & Activities Assistant	
1	Adult Education/Activities Tutor	
1	Horticultural Tutor	NVQ 3 in Garden & horticulture C& G teaching certificate part 1
1	Senior Administrator	RSA 2 typing NVQ 3 Business Administration City & Guilds - computing
1	Administrator	English Language, Maths, French, Accounts, Commercial History, Modern Studies, Biology
2	Receptionist/Administrative Assistant	Typing 3 Word processing 1 Shorthand 50 wpm Audio typing Manuscript 2 English communications Paralegal training BTEC in Care Psychology English, Child Development, French, Science, Geography, Music
1	Medical Secretary	Typing Accountancy Biology English Afrikaans

1	Mental Health Act Administrator	Typing Maths, English Language, English literature, Geography, Biology, Art, Commerce, Institute of certified book-keepers
4	Maintenance staff	NVQ 2 carpentry & joinery
1	Gardener	
2	Domestic staff	
1	Independent Advocate	
7	Mental Health Act Managers	RNLD Social Work qualification

All staff commencing employment within HealthLinc House are required to complete an initial learning disability award framework based induction. In addition, an extensive staff-training programme, including in-house timetabled CPD sessions, has been developed within the hospital, which is available to all staff.

All staff undergo regular appraisal and training in subjects relevant to the patient group, ensuring that all staff are aware of the latest research based practice. Appraisals are conducted on an annual basis.

Staffing levels are determined by patient need but at all times it is ensured that there are at least the minimum number of staff on duty as agreed with the Healthcare Commission as listed below. These numbers will not include senior professionals within the multi-disciplinary team and the Hospital Manager.

No. Patients	Qualified-days	Care-days	Qualified-nights	Care-nights
1	1	1	1	1
2	1	1	1	1
3	1	1	1	1
4	1	1	1	1
5	1	2	1	1
6	1	2	1	1
7	1	2	1	1
8	1	2	1	2
9	1	3	1	2
10	1	3	1	2
11	1	3	1	2
12	1	4	2	2
13	1	4	2	2
14	1	4	2	2
15	2	4	2	2
16	2	4	2	3
17	2	4	2	3
18	2	5	2	3
19	2	5	2	3
20	2	5	2	4
21	3	5	2	4
22	3	5	2	4

23	3	5	2	4
24	3	6	2	5
25	3	6	2	5
26	3	6	2	5
27	3	7	2	5
28	3	7	2	6
29	3	8	2	7
30	3	8	2	7
31	3	9	2	7
32	3	9	2	7
33	3	10	2	8
34	3	13	2	8
35	3	14	2	9
36	3	15	2	10
37	3	16	2	11
38	3	18	2	13
39	3	18	2	13

Where it is identified that an individual patient requires additional staffing input (i.e. 1:1, 2:1), this will be provided in addition to the basic staffing numbers.

Each individual apartment is staffed based on the specific needs of the patients, and is overseen by a registered nurse (Team Leader). Dedicated apartment staff teams of an identified number of care assistants are supported by a senior care assistant.

Agency staff are only used in exceptional circumstances where there is no other available alternative to ensure agreed staffing numbers. Agency staff are only used with the express authorisation of the Hospital Manager and are subject to a tailored induction process prior to working with patients.

RGN Nurses form part of the registered nurse team and have special responsibility for the physical healthcare monitoring of the patients. They do not undertake nurse in charge duties

All staff are checked by the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) system. All registered nurses are required to provide evidence of appropriate and recognised qualifications and have an up-to-date PIN number. In addition, all staff are required to provide evidence of any educational certificates or achievements.

HealthLinc House also has access to the services of external professionals, these include:

- General Practitioner (GP)
- Dentist
- Chiropodist
- Physiotherapist
- Aromatherapist
- Pharmacist
- Hairdresser
- Chaplaincy

Advocacy
Allied Healthcare Professionals

Quality is at the centre of the HealthLinc House philosophy, and all staff selection and recruitment policies are directed towards the provision of the highest quality standard of care. HealthLinc House is committed to training and development for all staff and implements NVQ programmes for all care assistants and support staff.

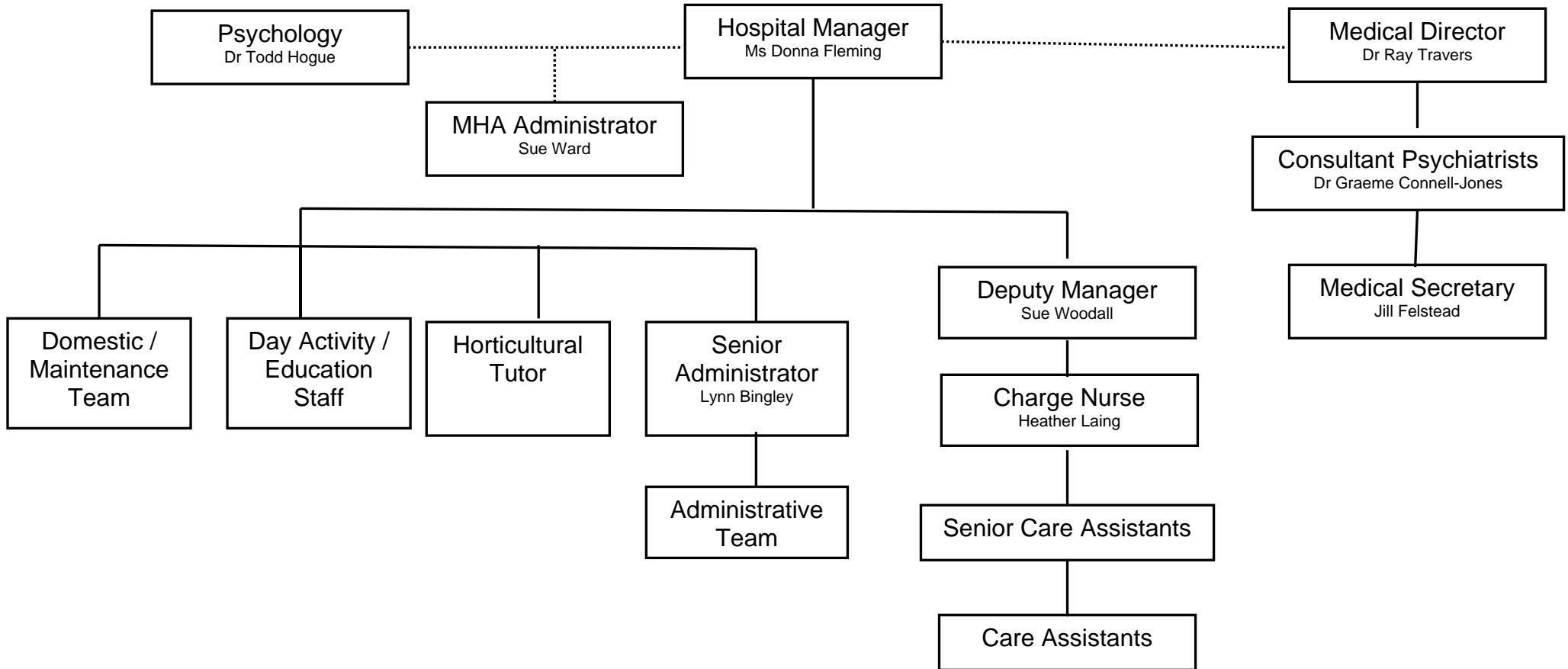
HealthLinc House has achieved Investors in People recognition.

The Medical Director supported by full-time and visiting Psychiatrists takes responsibility for the clinical management of the patients. In addition, they provide out of hours on-call cover which allows for the attendance of a Consultant Psychiatrist at the hospital within a 45 minute period. In the event of physical illness, emergency arrangements are in place for patients to attend the local hospital Accident and Emergency Department which is within a 15 minute journey time.

HealthLinc House benefits from the services of an independent advocate.

(5) The organisational Structure of the establishment

HealthLinc House Independent Hospital Organisational Chart



- (6) The kinds of treatment or other services provided for the purposes of the establishment, the range of needs for which those services are intended to meet and the facilities which are available for the benefit of the patient.**

Treatment Programme

HealthLinc House operates a fully integrated Care Programme Approach process which places the patients at the head of the decision making process. CPA reviews are held at 6 weeks, 3 months and thereafter on a 6 monthly basis. Additionally, patients progress is reviewed on a monthly basis at multi disciplinary ward round meetings.

Careful assessment and taking time to get to know the individual allows us, with full patient involvement, to develop tailored individual plans of care to meet our patients needs. We organise many social and recreational activities and make every effort to accommodate each patient's interests and hobbies. Our social activities include swimming, bowling, cinema, shopping, horse riding, local town trips, outings, trips to places of interest and home visits as well as social events with the hospital. A full activities programme is displayed in the hospital.

Everyone living at HealthLinc House is given the opportunity to develop personally and experience increasing opportunities. We support individuals to exercise choice in making both major life and day to day decisions. Meaningful activity and community integration are key elements in a fulfilled life; patients are encouraged and supported to participate in a variety of activities both on-site and in the wider community. These typically will include further education, work and college placements, social skills development, nature preservation and horticulture. HealthLinc House works in close collaboration with local colleges.

Risk is assessed prior to admission and is integral to the care planning and review process.

Our therapeutic approach is supported by a dedicated multi disciplinary team of committed professionals. Care delivery and outcomes are monitored and evaluated through the CPA process, case reviews and ward round meetings.

HealthLinc House Independent Hospital is a rehabilitation unit, however, the access doors to the hospital and main residential areas are locked at all times for the protection of vulnerable people. If at any time other doors require locking to ensure the well being, safety and protection of patients living in the hospital, the process will be administered in line with the Mental Health Act Code of Practice requirements.

Patient Involvement

An individualised approach tailored to the patients' preferences, circumstances and resources is critical. The philosophy in HealthLinc House advocates that opportunities should be created so patients feel involved in planning their own care, and empowered during the treatment process.

- 1) Opportunities will be provided whenever possible for the patient to be autonomous in decision-making.

- 2) Information will be given to the patient, therefore establishing a feeling of empowerment within the patient.
 - 3) Decisions will be made **'with'** the patient and not **'for'** the patient.
 - 4) The needs and wishes of the patient will be central to any review meeting.
 - 5) Informed consent will always be obtained where practicable.
 - 6) Care plans will be written with, agreed, and signed by the patient. The patient will receive copies of their care plans and these will be reviewed monthly with their Keyworker.
- Information provision is made available in easy read format where this is required or requested.

Physical Health Surveillance for patients

Maintaining optimum physical health forms part of our care strategy. The hospital provides several measures to try to ensure that physical health is maintained; any deviation from normal base line functioning will be quickly detected and treated accordingly.

All patients are registered with a local General Practitioner (GP).

Patients are also able to access a wide range of healthcare services, as appropriate. These can include Dentistry, Speech and Language Therapy, Physiotherapy, Chiropody, Optician. All patients have a monthly health check which includes general base-line observation (weight, blood pressure, pulse) In addition to this all patients are offered an annual full health screen.

Health education is promoted within the therapeutic programme. Opportunities are provided within the service to participate in regular exercise. Healthy eating is promoted and special dietary needs are catered for.

Patients from ethnic minorities

All patients are treated equally regardless of race or culture. Special consideration is given to ensuring that issues concerning cultural diversity are addressed. HealthLinc House will meet any specific requirements that patients might have pertaining to their ethnic and cultural background. This will be facilitated in a sensitive and respectful manner.

Religious needs

Through comprehensive care planning the religious needs of the patients are identified. Patients who are able to use community facilities will be able to attend religious services at local places of worship of their choice. For those patients who so wish, links will be made with the relevant local spiritual leader.

Local places of worship are listed below:-

- Welton Methodist Chapel, Manor Lane, Welton, Lincoln
- St Mary's Church, Welton, Lincoln
- Lincoln Baptist Church, Croft Street, Lincoln (01522 575745)
- Islamic Association of Lincoln, Orchard Street, Lincoln (01522 543103)
- Our Lady of Lincoln Roman Catholic Church, Laughton Way, Lincoln (01522 522971)
- Quakers Religious Society of Friends, Park Street, Lincoln (01522 546019)

- Spiritualist Church (within the Unitarian Chapel), High Street, Lincoln
(01522 862225)

Interpreter Services

We will provide interpreters when required. These are accessed via established arrangements with independent practitioners or through the independent advocacy service.

Staff support and Clinical Supervision

Clinical supervision can be a self-actualising process that assists the nurse in performing to his or her fullest potential by fostering the growth of skill development. Clinical Supervision is not an option but a professional requirement within HealthLinc House. Supervision complements the process of appraisal, professional standard setting and clinical audit. The use of regular and appropriate supervision can contribute to an organisational culture, which encourages innovative practice, provides high levels of motivation and satisfaction, and encourages strong colleague relationships.

All new staff complete a comprehensive induction programme that equips them with the necessary skills needed to work at HealthLinc House.

Prevention of Abuse

HealthLinc House has clear policies which aim to protect vulnerable individuals in line with Nursing and Midwifery Council (N.M.C.) guidance. The management and clinical professionals who work in HealthLinc House recognise their responsibility to ensure that they safeguard the interests of their patients at all times. The misuse of professional power will not be accepted and will be subject to clear monitoring within the hospital. Patients have the right to an environment that is safe, supportive and free from abuse. Positive and effective staff team/patient relationships will be encouraged.

Dealing with and learning from untoward incidents

Untoward incidents may occur and temporarily disturb the smooth running of the hospital. However, incidents of this nature can also have positive outcomes and help the hospital to learn, mature and operate more effectively in the future. HealthLinc House adopts a 'model of reflection' that forms the base for any investigation. Reflection is an intellectual and affective activity through which individuals explore their experiences in order to develop new understanding and appreciation.

Following any critical incident de-brief and subsequent investigation the management team will decide if new policies need to be implemented to avoid similar incidents in the future. Action planning will also be prioritised on any agenda for change in future practice.

Care Planning

We endeavour to ensure that all care plans are individualised, promote a person centred approach and provide a basis for each individual to meet their own potential. We believe in a holistic approach to care where psychological, physical, spiritual, social, cultural and educational needs are recognised as having equal importance.

We are committed to ensuring the full participation of patients, relatives and significant others in the care planning process.

Monitoring and controlling drug and substance misuse

HealthLinc House takes a proactive approach in identifying potential risks and developing care plans for patients' needs in this area, dependant on the range and the severity of the problem. We do not admit patients with a primary diagnosis of addiction.

Range of needs the service is intended to meet.

HealthLinc House provides individual packages of care for people with learning disabilities who have mental health needs and may exhibit challenging behaviour.

The service provides opportunities for therapeutic treatment, social and recreational engagement and rehabilitation. This is achieved through a combination of a multi-disciplinary team approach, a structured environment, effective professional / patient relationships, and behavioural intervention.

Care Programme Approach (CPA)

HealthLinc House implements a full Care Programme Approach to reflect the individual needs of its patients. All patients have an initial CPA within 3 months of being placed within the service and subsequently are subject to a 6 monthly CPA review. A full CPA package has been developed specific to the needs of the patients within the service.

Nursing and Midwifery Council (N.M.C)

The service implements and recognises all guidance provided by the NMC. All registered nurses are made fully aware of their responsibilities to act within this guidance at all times. Operational policies are cross-referenced with the NMC guidelines taking into account particular issues such as the code of conduct, administration of medicines and the prevention of abuse.

Advocacy Service

An independent advocacy service is available to all patients living within the hospital.

Specialist Treatments

Any specialist treatments or non-typical treatment interventions will only be administered following a comprehensive review with the patient and the multi-disciplinary team. We act at all times in accordance with the Mental Health Act (1983) and other legislation pertaining to specialist treatments for patients. We recognise that obtaining full informed consent from the patient is fundamental in this process.

Managing Patient Finances

Strict protocols and policies are implemented within HealthLinc House to prevent the abuse or neglect of patients' finances. This is subject to regular and comprehensive audit at both the hospital and organisational level. A patients banking system is in operation to manage patient finances at a local level. Patients are able to access money and obtain a statement of their account upon request.

Due to the nature of the environment and some of the risks associated with patients keeping high amounts of money, restrictions may be in operation as to the amount of money that a patient may keep on their person at a given time. These risks may include absconding, manipulation and vulnerability. We therefore anticipate the need to manage some of the patient's finances, whilst at the same time ensuring that we do not conflict with their human rights.

Clinical Governance

The quality of service provision is monitored through a comprehensive audit cycle which is reviewed at both hospital management committee and clinical governance committee levels. These committees are comprised of key senior personnel within the organisation

Pharmacy Services

These are provided via a service level agreement with a local pharmacy group

Facilities

A comprehensive overview of the facilities available for the benefit of patients is detailed in part one (1) of this document.

(7) The arrangements made for consultations with patients about the operation of the establishment.

Patient Satisfaction

All patients are encouraged to play a part in the development of the service and regular apartment meetings are held in order to gain a collective opinion of progress as well as individual perceptions of the service. A 'suggestions box' is located in a central area in order that patients may raise issues anonymously. A patient satisfaction survey is completed annually by the Clinical Director and the information collated and used to improve the level of service. The results of the survey are incorporated into the patients guide.

Additionally regular review meetings are conducted between the independent advocacy service, the Hospital Manager and senior management staff within the organisation.

It is important that all patients feel that their views are listened to and acted upon. It is imperative that patients' views are given importance regardless of their race, culture or background. Staff must be able to demonstrate that they listen and act upon patients' views, encourage discussion and act on issues raised. The management approach to the hospital must create an open, positive and inclusive atmosphere in order that patients benefit from the ethos, leadership and management approach of the service.

(8) The arrangements made for contact between patients and their relatives, friends and representatives.

Patients' relatives

We value the opinions of relatives and significant others. Regular meetings are held with relatives and significant others, and relatives questionnaires distributed. As part of the therapeutic treatment programme we actively encourage relatives and significant others to play a key role in supporting patients whom they are related to.

Great emphasis is placed upon the links with the patient's family and friends with patient wishes being taken into account. Visitors are welcome at appropriate times and a visiting room is available away from the main areas.

MHA Management Plan

HealthLinc House employs a Mental Health Act Administrator who ensures all aspects of the Mental Health Act and Code of Practice processes and administration are followed. This includes liaising with the Mental Health Act Commission in co-ordinating tribunals, making appropriate arrangements for SOAD visits and ensuring legal documentation and written information is available for detained patients. Mental Health Act administration reports are provided to the Hospital Management Committee who in turn report to the Clinical Governance Committee.

The reading of patients rights is undertaken on a regular basis by the patients named nurse and recorded in the multi disciplinary ward round minutes. HealthLinc House has appointed Mental Health Act Managers who undertake duties as outlined in the Mental Health Act 1983 and the Mental Health Act Code of Practice, including renewal of section papers and holding Mental Health Act Managers Hearings. Annual update training is provided for the Mental Health Act Managers.

MHA code of practice for visitors

Maintaining contact with friends and relatives is recognised as an important element in a patients' treatment and rehabilitation. Decisions to prohibit a visit by a person whom the patient has requested to visit can be regarded as a serious interference with the human rights of the patient and can only be made in exceptional circumstances. Any decision to exclude a visitor will be fully documented and available for independent scrutiny by the Mental Health Act Commission.

A visitors meeting room is provided in the main administration building. Visiting times are flexible by prior arrangement and subject to a multi-disciplinary review as to whether the visit should be supervised or unsupervised by a member of the clinical team.

HealthLinc House has clearly identified written policies pertaining to arrangements for the visiting of patients by children. Such visits will be based on thorough multi-disciplinary risk assessments and will be reviewed on a regular basis.

Patient Relationships

We encourage the development of appropriate social relationships and every opportunity is made for patients to develop positive interpersonal relationships with their fellow peers.

It is recognised that physical relationships between patients can be open to manipulation, particularly where a patient is vulnerable. Relationships between patients will be closely monitored and supervised whilst respecting the individual patient's human rights.

(9) The arrangements for dealing with complaints

Dealing with complaints

Complaints are taken very seriously within HealthLinc House and a copy of the complaints procedure is on display within the hospital. The complaints procedure contains the address and contact details of our Head Office and the local office of the Healthcare Commission and the Mental Health Act Commission. We respond immediately and appropriately to any complaint or concern raised.

All patients and relatives, if dissatisfied can complain to the Healthcare Commission.

All patients have the right to access their funding authority's complaints procedure, details of which will be available from the Hospital Manager.

Patients also have the right to access the NHS complaints procedure and the ombudsman and will be supported to do so should they so wish.

In addition, patients detained under the Mental Health Act (1983) or their representatives can lodge a complaint with the Mental Health Act Commission should they wish.

Patients may use the visiting independent advocate, also available on a freephone number if a complaint needs to be raised with the clinical team. Contact details for the advocate are displayed within the hospital.

Policy 6 Complaints Procedure

Scope

All Hospitals

Purpose

To ensure that any complaints generated by any of the patients or their relatives are recorded, investigated and actioned.

It shall be the responsibility of the Hospital Manager to ensure that this procedure is understood and complied with by all staff and shall apply to any complaint raised by a patient, relative or advocate.

Definition

A complaint is a statement of dissatisfaction relating to the individual, the care they are receiving or, any other aspect of the service.

Procedure

It shall be the responsibility of the Hospital Manager to ensure that all patients within their area are aware that complaints shall, in the first instance, be made to the Senior Nurse/Carer on duty.

The Senior Nurse shall attend to the complaint and will record in the Complaints Book the date of the complaint, the name of the person who made the complaint and the action taken to resolve the complaint. The Senior Nurse is responsible for ensuring the Hospital Manager is made aware of the complaint.

If the patient considers that the complaint has not been satisfactorily resolved by the Hospital Manager, the patient shall be advised to contact the Chief Executive/Clinical Director and shall be assisted to do so if required.

If the patient considers that the complaint has not been satisfactorily resolved by the above and the patient wishes to go further, they shall be advised to contact the Assessment Manager, the Healthcare Commission. The name of the Officer and their telephone number shall be supplied to the patient by the Hospital Manager.

In the case of detained patients; the Mental Health Act Commission address should be made available to the patient or representative to lodge a complaint, should they wish to do so. A poster must always be on full display in the clinical area of the hospital for ease of access.

For patient's who are funded by the Primary Care Trust: Access to the Trust's complaint procedure must be made easily accessible and available.

If the complaint has been made to the Healthcare Commission and if the patient is not satisfied with the outcome, the patient shall be advised to contact the Social Services Ombudsman.

All patients shall be made aware of the complaints procedure, a copy of which shall be displayed prominently in each Hospital including the contact address of the Healthcare Commission.

Complaint forms shall be freely available for patients, relatives and staff. Representation either internally or independently should be offered to any patient who wishes to raise a complaint.

The response to any complaint must be swift but detailed and the aim of this procedure is to provide guidance on managing the most serious complaints and subsequent investigations through to a conclusion.

Not all conclusions will satisfy the complainant but an objective, diligent investigation will stand up to external scrutiny, highlighting the professionalism behind Healthlinc Individual Care's approach.

Complaints will fall into one of 3 categories:

Staff complaints following the Grievance Procedure described in the Healthlinc Individual Care Staff Handbook.

Minor complaints

covering relative, patient or external authority complaints concerning operational standards and practise relating to everyday events.

Serious complaints

covering relative, patient or external authority complaints concerning allegation of verbal or physical abuse, negligence or neglect. These complaints could result in media interest and Health/Local Authority, Mental Health Act Commission, Child Protection Agency or Police involvement.

Healthlinc Individual Care's policy is to investigate and present a conclusion to any complaint where possible within 20 working days.

Documents

- Healthlinc Individual Care, Complaints Procedure – ref end of Procedure (this should be displayed in all Hospitals next to the Statement of Purpose)
- Complaints Form for recording minor complaints
- Serious Incident Report Form for recording serious complaints relating to abuse, gross negligence or neglect

Contact details:**Healthcare Commission**

Maid Marian House
56 Hounds Gate
Nottingham
NG1 6BG
TEL: 0207 448 8188

Mental Health Act Commission

Maid Marian House
56 Hounds Gate
Nottingham
NG1 6BG

TEL: 0115 943 7100

(10) The arrangements for respecting the privacy and dignity of patients

Respecting the privacy and dignity of patients

HealthLinc House respects the privacy and dignity of patients. To this end patients are afforded single en-suite bedrooms all of which are lockable. Staff are required to knock prior to entering the patients' bedrooms and communal areas.

Female patients can choose to have access to female GP's, Consultant Psychiatrist, Psychologist, nursing and care staff.

Patients are able to access areas of the hospital for added privacy when discussing information with other professionals (Psychology, Advocacy, Social Work, etc). All information will be treated in a confidential manner as highlighted in local policies and procedures unless, by not sharing such information there could be a serious health and safety risk.

All staff within HealthLinc House act at all times with the highest degree of professionalism. To this end they are encouraged to act in a way that could not be perceived by the patient as being disrespectful.

Observation and Security

During periods where it is necessary to increase a patient's level of observation we will endeavour to respect their privacy and dignity balanced with clinical risk. Where it is necessary to increase a patients level of observation, privacy and dignity will be provided whenever possible and where this is reduced due to the level of observation required, it will be reviewed at the earliest possible opportunity.