

**National Institute of Health Research Imperial Patient Safety Translational Research Centre
(PSTRC): Safe care for adults with complex health needs survey**

Response from the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh - Lay Advisory Committee

Based on your experiences and concerns, please could you suggest some questions that you would like researchers to answer in order to make care safer for adults with complex health needs?

Examples provided by the Lay Advisory Committee of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh include how communication with patients can be improved so there is less need for repetition at every appointment, which was considered a critical issue. It requires a high level of understanding of how to communicate with patients who have particular needs – ranging from dementia to learning disabilities; speech issues; deafness and so on. There needs to be adaptations to the approach and pre-knowledge if a patient has a difficulty so that arrangements can be made as appropriate and staff able to allocate sufficient time to take account of needs of the patient.

The continuity of the health professional providing care is also important so that the history is better known and not constantly being repeated without a relationship being built. It makes it possible to be seen as a person and not just a patient going through the system.

There needs to be improved ways of notating a file to encompass new information and to ensure that this information is also passed to GPs and shared with other appropriate health and care professionals. It is critical that there is a smooth passing of information as to how a person is within a care home setting and any specific issues to ensure care can be adapted in hospital. Vice versa the care home must be informed of any issues arising from the stay to ensure continuity of care and to also manage confusion for someone coming out of hospital if the experience was disturbing as it was unfamiliar and out with a daily routine.