



Housing and hospital discharge

for patients in [England](#)



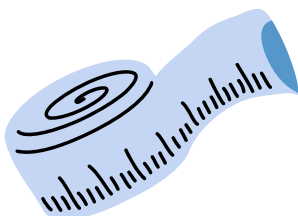
Click here to view our Housing Recommendations Pathway for a more detailed overview of this process



Home assessment

Reviewing suitability

If the case is expected to be complex, a home assessment should be carried out, ideally an Occupational Therapist (OT) and community nursing team. The OT can assess whether the home environment can be made suitable with adaptations and adjustments, or used as an interim discharge destination.



To make decisions around the suitability of housing, the OT, nursing team and any other relevant professionals should come together to discuss the home visit and clinical reasoning around decision making regarding the suitability of the home. Following this, a lead professional should then discuss the outcome with the family.



Suitable

Planning for discharge

If the home is suitable and safe for the child to be discharged home from hospital to (or can be adapted to become suitable), discharge planning should proceed with the intention to discharge to the existing home.



This includes if the home is considered suitable short-term or for an interim period of time. Concurrent planning for long-term accommodation can start, but if there is an environment which the child can safely be discharged home to, the aim should be to discharge the child to this environment.



Unsuitable

Statutory Duty to Refer

If the property is unsuitable for the child to be discharged from hospital to home (e.g., studio accommodation, house of multiple occupation, inaccessible) then the hospital have a Duty to Refer* the family to a council to assist them under Homelessness legislation.



The Local Housing Authority (Council) assess the household and provide advice. If eligible for further support they will establish a **Personal Housing Plan**. This may include support into temporary accommodation or long-term accommodation, which may be in the private rental sector, or may be an offer of social housing.



***Statutory Duty to Refer:** Hospitals have a Duty to Refer patients who may be homeless or at risk of homeless to a Local Authority, for instance, if they do not have suitable accommodation available for their discharge from hospital.

ADVICE AND SUPPORT SERVICES

There are a range of advice and support services that are available to support both families/carers and the healthcare professionals supporting them, with navigating rehousing issues.

LOCAL ADVICE AND SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES/CARERS



Using the [AdviceLocal tool](#), you can identify local services to support with housing enquiries. This will include the contact details for the relevant Local Authority and their Housing and Homelessness teams and services, in addition to identifying local advice charities who can provide assistance with housing matters and enquiries.

NATIONAL ADVICE AND SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES/CARERS



Shelter is a charity that specialises in advice around Housing and Homelessness. They have lots of useful information on [their website](#), including template letters.

Shelter can be contacted for advice, although this will depend on what part of the country the patient's family live in:

- [England](#)
- [Scotland](#)
- [Wales](#)

For specialist housing advice in [Northern Ireland](#), contact [Housing Rights](#).

Citizens Advice are a network of independent charities who offer advice across a range of welfare rights topics, including Housing.

As well as a [website](#) with lots of useful information, the local charities who make up the Citizens Advice network can offer direct advice too.

n.b., there is no advice available online from Citizens Advice for residents of [Northern Ireland](#), however they can contact their [local advice agencies](#).

FOR HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS



You can use the Damp and Mould Checklist toolkit, designed to assist health and social care professionals who visit residential properties for LTV patients in the Pan Thames region. The toolkit offers guidance, resources, and template letters for local authorities and landlords.

Other resources and Government guidance listed on [this webpage](#) are applicable to patients throughout England, including the original, pan-disability OHID Damp and Mould checklist, which our LTV checklist was adapted from.

Shelter offers a range of services to professionals who are working with clients who are facing homelessness. This includes **NHS professionals in the scope of their role in the Duty to Refer** patients who are homeless or facing homelessness.

Services include:

- [Helpline and webchat facility](#)
- [Educational webinars, elearning and pre-recorded sessions](#)



Last review: August 2026

Pan Thames Paediatric LTV Programme



**North Thames
Paediatric Network**
Connecting paediatric services



**South Thames
Paediatric Network**
Transforming Healthcare for
Children and Young People