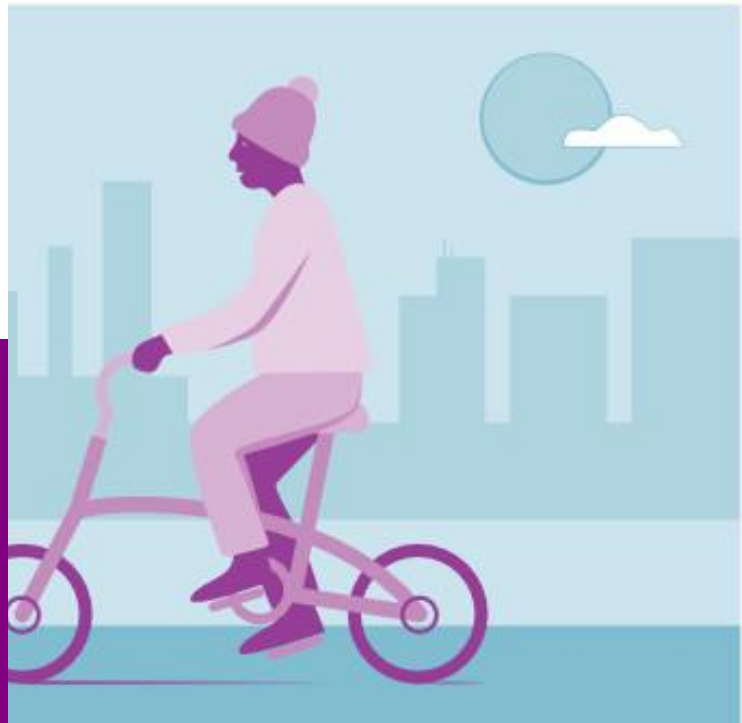




**The Health and  
Social Care  
Alliance  
Scotland  
(the ALLIANCE)**



**‘Hospital at Home’ Service  
Parliament Debate Briefing**

**The ALLIANCE  
24 May 2023**

## Introduction

For many, admission to hospital can come with feelings of anxiety and some disruption. By supporting people to stay in their own homes for longer, the Hospital at Home service improves people's experiences, wellbeing, and allows them to receive care on their own terms in familiar and comfortable surroundings.

Evidence shows that those benefiting from the service are more likely to avoid hospital or care home stays for up to six months after a period of acute illness<sup>1</sup>. And, in addition to reducing pressure on hospitals by providing care in the community, the ALLIANCE believes that the Hospital at Home service reflects a positive change in the culture of how health and social care is delivered, by focusing on shared decision making and delivering the personalised outcomes that matter to individuals and their families.

The ALLIANCE has been working with the Chief Medical Officer for Scotland, the Scottish Government Realistic Medicine Team, the Realistic Medicine Clinical Lead for NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, as well as people with lived experience to find out more about the benefits of this service in the context of the Realistic Medicine<sup>2</sup> agenda and delivering Value Based Health and Care<sup>3</sup> in Scotland. This briefing summarises the learning we have collected from patients and professionals.

## Supporting shared decision making with Hospital at Home in NHS GGC

The ALLIANCE National Lead for Caring and Outreach, Tommy Whitelaw, conducted an interview with Dr Jude Marshall<sup>4</sup>, a GP with a special interest in 'Hospital at Home' in Glasgow City, and the Clinical Lead for Realistic Medicine for Greater Glasgow and Clyde for Primary and Community Care.

Dr Marshall shared how the Hospital at Home team use shared decision making to provide better care for their patients:

"In Hospital at Home, we feel that every step involves shared decision making.

It starts with the GP or the hospital doctor referring the patient in to us, because it's not for everybody. The patient will be in their own home, we need to make sure they feel safe and secure and it's the right place for them to be cared for.

Then we would hope to tell them a little bit about the treatments or the investigations that we would propose, and we try and use that BRAN questionnaire to make sure we are covering everything, and giving patients the chance to discuss the benefits, the risks, the alternatives, and what would happen if they did nothing, with every step of their care.



Dr Marshall also commented on how have patients, carers, families, and individuals responded to the Hospital at Home approach:

“Oh, I think they've loved it, to be honest. For the population that we look after, so we look after older people who have maybe had a period of illness before they've come to us, involving them in decisions about where they're cared for, and how they're cared for – families and patients love it.

They feel safe and secure at home mostly, they tend to get better quicker, they're involved in every decision along the way, whether it be, ‘Do they go into hospital?’ Do they stay with us? Do we do blood tests? Do we not? Do we do investigations? Do we not?’ – they're involved at every step.

So I think it transfers a lot of the control back to the patients and the carers, doesn't it?”

## Experience of Hospital at Home

The ALLIANCE then visited a former Hospital at Home patient, Stephen Green, to find out about his own experiences of the Hospital at Home service in Glasgow, the impact it's had on his life, and the value he found in being able to receive treatment in his own home:

“If you fancy a cup of tea or if you fancy a sandwich, it's there. You know, if you fancy a chat, with your wife on or on the phone or whatever, it's there, you know.

[For] something like what was ailing me, Hospital at Home's ideal... this has done me a lot of good, you know. I would recommend it to anybody it suits.”

The ALLIANCE produced a short film of this visit <sup>5</sup>.

From Stephen's experience, it is clear that the Hospital at Home service reflects a more person centered approach to care: by providing people with the time and space to discuss what really matters to them in comfortable surroundings; allowing people to take control over their own health outcomes; and supporting them to decide on the type of care that is right for them.

This approach successfully delivers on the aims of Realistic Medicine as well as the Chief Medical Officer's latest publication on ‘Delivering value based health and care: a vision for Scotland’<sup>6</sup>.



## Further reflections from an ALLIANCE member's event

On 19 April 2023, ALLIANCE Director Irene Oldfather Chaired our member's event on "Supporting shared decision making with Realistic Medicine", where we heard from people with lived experience about the barriers they have faced in feeling involved in decisions around their own care. Throughout many experiences shared during this event, some key actions that emerged were the need to challenge the traditional power imbalance that is often felt between patient and professional; improve continuity of care across clinicians, teams and services; and providing information in a format accessible to patients to support them to make informed choices.

From both Dr Marshall's and Stephen Green's experiences of the Hospital at Home service, from both clinician and patient perspective, the service addresses these core barriers. By treating patients at home, it transfers control back to patients by providing care on their terms in their environment; by having care coordinated through a GP and delivered by district nurses, they experience better continuity of care; and through the shared decision making conversations that take place before Hospital at Home is provided, patients are more informed about the treatment options available to them.

ALLIANCE Director Irene Oldfather shares her reflections on the Hospital at Home service:

"It's clear from the patient stories that we've heard, across several face-to-face sessions and our outreach work, that involving people themselves in conversations about their health and wellbeing is central to designing services that meet their needs.

People are at the heart of the Hospital at Home programme; they value the flexibility and security that being in a home setting brings, and particularly for elderly people, familiar faces and spaces reduces the potential for adverse incidents. Ultimately, it's about creating options that best suit people and communities, and ensuring access to the right care in the right place".

You can read the full member's event summary report from this event on our website<sup>7</sup>. We were joined by the Chief Medical Officer for Scotland, Sir Gregor Smith, who was recently interviewed by ALLIANCE Chief Officer Sara Redmond about the work being done to progress Realistic Medicine in Scotland<sup>8</sup>.



## About the ALLIANCE

The Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (the ALLIANCE) is the national third sector intermediary for a range of health and social care organisations. We have a growing membership of over 3,000 national and local third sector organisations, associates in the statutory and private sectors, disabled people, people living with long term conditions and unpaid carers. Many NHS Boards, Health and Social Care Partnerships, Medical Practices, Third Sector Interfaces, Libraries and Access Panels are also members.

The ALLIANCE is a strategic partner of the Scottish Government and has close working relationships, several of which are underpinned by Memorandum of Understanding, with many national NHS Boards, academic institutions and key organisations spanning health, social care, housing and digital technology.

Our vision is for a Scotland where people of all ages who are disabled or living with long term conditions, and unpaid carers, have a strong voice and enjoy their right to live well, as equal and active citizens, free from discrimination, with support and services that put them at the centre.

The ALLIANCE has three core aims; we seek to:

- Ensure people are at the centre, that their voices, expertise and rights drive policy and sit at the heart of design, delivery and improvement of support and services.
- Support transformational change, towards approaches that work with individual and community assets, helping people to stay well, supporting human rights, self management, co-production and independent living.
- Champion and support the third sector as a vital strategic and delivery partner and foster better cross-sector understanding and partnership.

## Contact

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