What is Intermediate Care?

Intermediate care services are designed to help people, usually older people, who have an illness or injury to stay at home rather than go into hospital, and to support people to get back home as quickly as possible after a hospital stay.

Intermediate care services can be provided to people in different ways. Although most Intermediate Care in Oxfordshire is currently provided as a bed-based service, it can also be provided as a community service in people’s own homes by a team of social care and health staff.

Intermediate Care beds are defined as “short term beds commissioned in care homes that are supported with therapy inputs, aimed at maximising the patient’s independence and capacity to undertake activities of daily living”. As part of their contractual terms, providers of Intermediate Care beds in Oxfordshire are required to deliver services that:

- Provide nursing supported Intermediate Care bed(s) to meet a range of patient needs, 24 hours per day, 7 days per week
- Actively promotes the health and independence of all those admitted
- Ensure people are cared for in an appropriate setting, with respect to personal privacy, dignity, choice and independence, and are provided with opportunities for rehabilitation and recovery throughout
- Provide a holistic care experience which addresses the physical, psychological, cultural and social needs of patients, their family, friends, and carers
- Facilitate timely discharges from hospital and prompt admissions from the community
- Comprehensively assess the risks associated with the person’s needs and care, including any pressure damage and potential to fall, to take action as necessary and develop and document a plan to manage these risks
- Develop and deliver an effective, person-centred, documented care plan(s) that provides enabling care and support to assist patients who are recovering from an acute episode or period of ill health to regain their confidence, motivation and ability to undertake activities of daily living
- Complete and deliver the therapy care plan for the patient, in accordance with its requirements, day and night, on a 7 day per week basis
- Identify a named and suitably qualified key worker(s) to support the patient and act as a point of contact for other members of the Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) and the patient’s family and informal carers
- Provide services that are compliant with the Essential Standards of Quality and Safety

The purpose of intermediate care based in the community is to provide a structured programme of therapy-led, supportive and enabling care to service users in order to:

- Assist and enable service users to achieve and maintain an optimum level of health and independence at home or in another community setting
- Reduce inappropriate or avoidable admissions to, and facilitate prompt discharges from hospital (i.e. step up/step down care)
What is Intermediate Care?

- Enable a full assessment of the service user’s needs and future care requirements to be carried out in a non-acute environment where the focus is on promoting independence and a return home

Source: Oxfordshire County Council consultation document Intermediate Care in North Oxfordshire pages 2 - 3