**PML Neighbourhood Team prevent hospital admission for Elderly Bicester patients**

**A new independent report confirms that the trial of a community frailty service (Virtual Ward) in Bicester has prevented 79% of elderly patients, over the age of 75 being admitted to hospital.**

Casual discussions based around further support for the elderly residents in Bicester with PML and local doctors led to a trial of a community frailty service.

One year later the service has exploded and early research has shown, that by offering the community frailty service, 79% of patients over the age of 75 from the three Bicester surgeries using the service, avoid hospital admission.

The service is headed up by two central Frailty GPS, Dr Hallam-Evans and Dr Summers who oversee the care of all patients admitted onto a ‘virtual ward round’. The patients are visited by the PML clinicians and all their notes are reviewed by the GPs on a daily basis.

Patients are referred into the service if they have had a hospital stay to prevent re-admission or by the own GP if they have concerns.

The clinicians work hard to keep patients out of hospital by providing compassionate homebased care which may include, taking blood and carrying out vital observations. The clinicians provide a holistic approach to the patient and, as often the only eyes on what is really happening within the home, can refer to other vital services such as Social Services, Community Therapy Services, Crisis Care, Older Adult Mental Health Team, District Nurses, Pallative Teams, AGE UK and the Community Matron.

The service has also become a great support for the families of the patients. As a relative starts to show signs of ageing it can feel quite daunting and the family don’t know where to turn or how to help. The service can guide, advise and assist the family by introducing them to the services that can help to ensure the patient is able to continue to live independently within their own home as they become more frail.

The PML clinicians go above and beyond to deliver this service to the patients and become welcome visitors to many of the service users that want to avoid hospital admission. Working on the team is not for the faint hearted, demand is high and the work is often varied and intricate but the commitment that the team show has a real impact on the patient’s outcomes and this is reflected in the results and the number of patients that are able to stay safely at home.

Collaborating with other healthcare professionals, the service offers something unique that is unrivalled in any other part of the community. A multi-disciplinary meeting once a week with all other services ensures that urgent cases are discussed in a timely manner and actioned sooner than can be done through the routine channels.

The service started with just 6 patients on it’s virtual ward round but now regularly reaches out to assist over 60.

“I’m so glad you called and offered this service, I FELT SO LOST KNOWING WHAT I COULD DO TO HELP MY MUM AND KEEP HER SAFE”