**Hospital Visitor Grant Scheme**

**Grant guidelines and terms and conditions**

**Aim**

The aim of the hospital visitor grant scheme is to provide additional social contact for people with a learning disability whilst they are in hospital. In particular this is to enable visits by paid carers to provide social contact and support whilst they are in hospital.

The scheme is not designed to replace services that should be provided or funded on a statutory basis. It is designed to ensure that immediate support can be provided to reduce anxiety and offer people with a learning disability the social contact they need on admission to hospital.

**Application process and eligibility criteria**

* The person for whom care is being provided must be a person with a learning disability and/ or autism, normally resident in Sutton and should be known to social services.
* The scheme is aimed at hospital stays in Sutton or nearby. If a planned procedure is due to take place further afield please contact us to discuss prior to application.
* The scheme is available for both children and adults with a learning disability who have regular paid support.
* Applications for funding can be made by social workers, health professionals, family members/ carers and organisations providing paid support for people with a learning disability.
* Applications must be made using the standard application form.
* Applications will be assessed on the basis of need, with decisions made by a senior staff member at Sutton Mencap.
* Grants can be awarded for planned procedures or on emergency admission.
* Where applications are approved, we will provide funds to enable the purchase of care. Sutton Mencap will not directly provide care or employ carers as part of this scheme. It is expected that the person providing the care should be known to the patient.
* If demand for funding is high, priority will be given to those people who are unable to receive visits from family members.
* The scheme exists to fund social contact (e.g. a friendly and familiar visitor). If the person needs extra paid support for medical reasons this should normally be met by statutory services.

**Conditions of the grant**

* Successful applicants must provide a short report following discharge from hospital, seeing out how the funds have been used, the service provided and the difference the service made to the person with a learning disability. In addition we may require evidence of expenditure.
* Any unused funds must be returned to Sutton Mencap so they can be used for other patients as part of the project.
* We will not grant funds retrospectively and will only pay for the costs incurred after a grant application is made, assuming it is approved.
* Funding will be provided on a time limited basis. Initial applications should be for a maximum of 20 hrs support at a maximum of £15 per hour. Additional applications can be made for further funding, if required.
* Permitted costs would typically include staff costs, travel expenses from the usual place of work and refreshments for visits in excess of 2 hours per day.
* Applicants should contact the learning disability liaison nurse to discuss the patient’s needs and where appropriate timetable the visits at times when they would make the most difference. e.g. mealtimes, during meetings.
* Paid carers must adhere to hospital policy when visiting and ensure they comply with the guidelines put in place to protect staff, patients and visitors.

**Information about the learning disability nurse at St Helier hospital**

There is a learning disability nurse on duty at St Helier Hospital from 9.00am to 11.00am and 3.30pm to 4.30pm each day. They have many procedures in place to help support the person you care for in hospital. You should make contact with them as soon as possible after admission (via the ward) to ensure the person you support receives the best care possible. If the person you support is going in for a planned procedure you can ask your GP to contact the learning disability nurse in advance.

To download a copy of these guidelines and an application form visit <http://www.suttonmencap.org.uk/what-we-do/hospital-visitor/>