

Integration in Action

The benefits of delivering housing
help for hospital patients

How Manchester Care & Repair improves the homes,
health and lives of older and disabled people



**'Every £1 spent on
adaptations to support
quicker hospital discharge
generates a £7.50 saving
for health and care'**

*Hospital to a Healthier Home
Evaluation (2019)
Care & Repair Cymru*

This brochure highlights the benefits to patients, the NHS and social care of linking Manchester Care & Repair's home repairs, adaptations, and related housing services to hospital discharge systems.

Outcomes of the housing interventions include:

- Reduced delayed transfer of care and reduced risk of hospital readmission
- Extended safe, independent living at home for people with long term conditions
- Improvements to patient's physical and mental health
- Falls risk prevention
- Frail elderly reduced health risks
- Increased resilience and ability to manage future life changes

Why connect NHS and practical housing services?

Where patients live, the quality, suitability and stability of their homes, has a significant impact on their health, and hence on demand for NHS and care services. The Covid-19 pandemic has further highlighted the close connections between homes and health.

Health, Housing, Ageing and Covid-19...

'The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed and amplified housing-related health inequalities. Groups in the population who are more likely to live in poor housing are often the same groups who are vulnerable to COVID-19 and other health conditions, including older people, people with existing health conditions, those with lower incomes and people from ethnic minority groups.'

Kings Fund & Centre for Ageing Better (2020) Homes, Health and Covid-19

A greater focus on prevention, extending healthy living at home, tackling health inequalities and working jointly across professional boundaries, including housing, are all part of the vision for the NHS. The NHS [Quick Guide to Health and Housing](#) highlights how housing help can

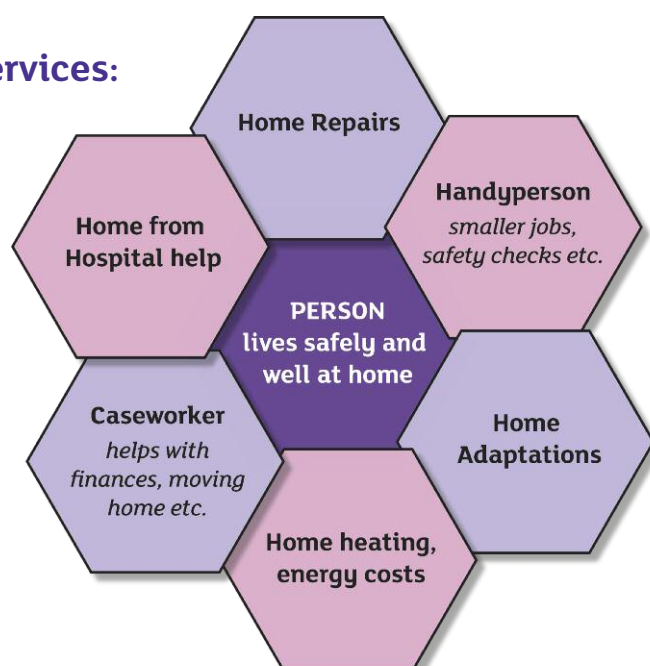
- Prevent people from being admitted to hospital
- Improve hospital discharge
- Support people to remain independent in the community

Improving homes so that older and disabled people can live safely & well

[Manchester Care & Repair](#), is a housing charity dedicated to increasing people's independence and improving their quality of life. It is reducing health risks to older and disabled patients through repairing, adapting and improving their homes, as well as offering related practical and financial support.

Some of the Manchester Care & Repair services:

- **Home repairs** – finding funding (grants/loans), supervising builders etc.
- **Handyperson** – small repairs & adaptations, falls prevention works
- **Home adaptations** – installation
- **Home from Hospital** – follow up assistance
- **Hospital Discharge** – support patients to return home safely
- **Urgent repairs to reduce health risk** e.g. heating repairs, gas safety
- **Home visiting caseworker** – wide range of advice & help e.g. benefits, social isolation etc.



Manchester Care & Repair - Improving Patients' Lives



Number of people helped

12,000+

Repairs/
Adaptations

1,000+

Handyperson jobs

6,000+



Call all discharged older patients

21,000+ called



Discharge Assistance

3,000+ people helped



Caseworker support

1,000+ people helped



Increased incomes by

£2,000,000+ p.a.

Transforming homes and lives

Mrs A, 69yrs, lives alone in a small, pre-1919 terraced house which she owns - her home for more than 30yrs. Years of living on a low income meant that Mrs A had been unable to afford essential repairs, so her home had become very dilapidated. She has a number of long term health conditions [COPD, asthma, a skin condition, mental health problems] and so the resulting cold, damp, unsafe condition of her home was worsening her physical and mental health.

The central heating boiler was broken so Mrs A had no hot water, just a single fan heater, and was struggling to afford the high unit cost of a pre-payment meter. With torn carpets, exposed floorboards and plaster crumbling off damp walls the risk of a fall was significant, whilst a poor diet was also impacting on her overall health. Mrs A felt increasingly vulnerable because, as she put it, 'the house stood out like a sore thumb' with its rotting window frames and poor state of repair.

Manchester Care & Repair was approached by a worried neighbour and gradually the MC&R caseworker built a relationship with Mrs A, who could see no way out of her predicament and was genuinely baffled that anyone should bother about her. The Home Repairs Team secured grants and loans and organised repair of the heating boiler plus installation of new doors & windows. She helped Mrs A claim the welfare benefits due to her, resulting in an increase in income so Mrs A can keep warm and start to eat properly again. With a warm home and hot water there were significant improvements in Mrs A's respiratory problems and skin condition. The changes to her home made an enormous difference to Mrs A's mental health.

Manchester's Health and Housing Challenges – and Solutions

In the Manchester City Council (MCC) area, nearly 45% of local neighbourhoods are among the 10% most deprived areas in England. A recent report by the Institute of Health Equity¹ analysing the role of health inequalities in GM on the variable impacts of Covid-19, notes the connections to housing conditions.



MCC has taken an innovative lead in setting a wide-ranging *policy* for provision of help with home improvements, adaptations and relocation, stating *'In providing Discretionary Assistance, the Council aims to adopt a holistic approach, supporting a number of innovative solutions, aimed at reducing dependency and assisting vulnerable individuals to live safely and comfortably in their homes'*.

One element of the policy which directly links with health improvement is a rapid response grant (max £7,000) where *'there is a serious risk to the applicant's health, safety, or wellbeing if the improvement works are not carried out'*. This grant is one of the invaluable solutions that Manchester Care & Repair can use to help hospital patients and others facing urgent housing problems.

Better home = better health

Mr B is 60 years old and has very poor health (including osteomyelitis, cardiac valve disease, paroxysmal atrial fibrillation, severe depression). He has lived in his small, terraced house, which he owns, for 28 years. After being discharged from hospital Mr B was called by Manchester C&R and visited by a caseworker. She discovered that Mr B was struggling financially and had had no central heating or hot water for over 2yrs since his boiler broke. Thanks to the rapid response emergency grant arrangement with Manchester City Council, MC&R was able to organise installation of a new boiler within 3 days. The caseworker also helped to increase Mr B's income by making successful applications for welfare benefits.

OUTCOME

Mr B's depression was greatly improved by these changes to his home and finances. Further hospitalisation risk is reduced now he is living in a warmer home with hot water, and he is less anxious knowing he can turn to MC&R for housing help should he need this in the future.

¹ Marmot M et al (2021) Build Back Fairer in Greater Manchester, Institute of Health Equity

Integration in Action: Manchester Health & Housing Joint Commissioning

Before 2019 the main MC&R services were separately funded /contracted by different parts of the council and NHS. Each service had different key performance indicators and reporting requirements. It was time consuming and difficult to manage (for both sides). As the services were working to achieve the same broad outcomes for people, it made sense to pull the commissions together.

From 2019 the local authority and CCG brought the different elements together into a single tender and jointly commissioned the holistic range of services delivered by MC&R. This has helped to bring processes and reporting together and changed the dynamics, helping MC&R to focus on improving the service offer and achieving outcomes.

Health & Housing Links

Poor-quality housing has a profound impact on health. Many of the most common chronic **long term health conditions** have a causal link to or are exacerbated by poor or unsuitable housing e.g.

- **heart disease**
- **stroke risk**
- **mental health problems**
- **arthritis and rheumatism**
- **respiratory conditions**
- **sight loss impacts**

Older people, particularly **frail elderly, are more prone to falls**, most of which occur at home. Removing home hazards has been proven to reduce that risk.⁴

Two thirds of people with **dementia** live in their own homes, with one third living alone. Modifications to those homes can make them safer places to live.

- Poor housing costs the NHS £1.4 billion p.a. in first year treatment costs alone ¹
- 96% of older people live in general housing i.e. not specifically built for older people ²
- 2 million older people live in a non-decent home, 78% are homeowners ³

¹ Nicol S et al (2015) Briefing Paper: The cost of poor housing to the NHS, BRE

² Garret H & Burris S (2015) Homes and ageing in England BRE

³ MHCLG Annual English Housing Survey data analysis by the Building Research Establishment (BRE)

⁴ ONS (2019)

Manchester Care & Repair

Offers help with home repairs, adaptations, improvements, home heating and energy problems handy person service, home safety checks, information, advice and assistance with housing and finance problems, Home from Hospital practical assistance.

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www.careandrepair-manchester.org.uk

‘Our lives have changed dramatically... [thanks to MC&R we have].. emotional, practical and financial stability. Adaptations and successful benefit applications wiped our worries away’

Mr & Mrs A, both in their 70s

About Care & Repair England

Care & Repair England (Charitable Society Reg. No. 25121R) aims to improve older people's housing. It innovates, develops, promotes and supports practical housing initiatives & related policy and practice which enable older people to live independently in their own homes for as long as they choose.

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