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The Rt Hon Sir Keir Starmer
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London
SW1A 2AA

Cc: Angela Rayner, Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State
for Housing, Communities and Local Government
Wes Streeting, Secretary of State for Health and Social Care

Dear Prime Minister,

We, the undersigned, write to urge you to commit to ending the inhumane and inefficient practice of discharging people from hospital to the street.

All anyone wants after a stay in hospital is somewhere safe and warm to recover, but this basic comfort is too often denied to people facing homelessness. At least 4,200 people were discharged from hospital to no fixed abode in 2022/23, many of whom were dealing with serious health conditions such as cancer, stroke, and complications related to HIV.

This is an unacceptably dangerous and inhumane way to treat people who are recovering from illness. Being discharged from hospital onto the streets is catastrophic for a person's health, forcing them to manage wound care, new medication regimes, and mobility issues while lacking even the most basic facilities.

This continued practice is as inefficient as it is unjust. Without a safe place to recover, people's health is put at risk again, perpetuating the cycle of readmission to hospital. People discharged into homelessness have 2.5 times the rate of emergency readmissions of those who have homes, resulting in secondary care costs eight times the average.

It doesn't have to be this way. We recognise that the NHS is under enormous pressure and that it must make best use of every hospital bed. That is why we are calling for a solution that allows patients who are ready to be discharged to recover in safety, freeing up their bed space. The evidence shows that specialist intermediate care and hospital teams for people facing homelessness, as recommended by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, reduce rough sleeping, emergency hospital admissions, and delayed discharges, all while saving the NHS money.

The upcoming cross-Government homelessness strategy, NHS 10-year plan, and Spending Review provide the perfect opportunity to ensure a safe place to recover for all, by committing to the reform and funding needed to provide specialist hospital teams and intermediate care for people facing homelessness.

The Government's ambitions to shift care from hospital to the community, reform the system to provide effective joined up support, and save the NHS money are the right ones. They

must be delivered in a way that is true to the constitution of our NHS and offer the same safety and protection to everyone. This starts by taking the opportunity to end the most shameful and egregiously inequitable treatment of people who have already been through so much.

Yours sincerely,

1,003 expert clinicians and frontline homelessness workers, including:

Dr Mumtaz Patel, President, Royal College of Physicians

Professor Kevin Fenton CBE, President, Faculty of Public Health

William Roberts, Chief Executive, Royal Society for Public Health

Geoff Coleman, CEO, Mildmay Mission Hospital

Professor Yvonne Doyle, the first Medical Director for Public Health at NHS England

Alex Bax, CEO, Pathway

Matt Downie MBE, CEO, Crisis

Rick Henderson, Chief Executive, Homeless Link

Micheal Chandler, CEO, Groundswell

Emma Haddad, CEO, St Mungo's

Simon Gale, CEO, Justlife Foundation

Jo Carter, CEO, Glass Door Homeless Charity

Tom Neumark, CEO, Porchlight

Duncan Shrubsole, CEO, St Martin-in-the-Fields Charity

Jean Templeton, Chief Executive, St Basils