**Intermediate Care – Agreeing A Common Definition**

1. There are numerous definition of Intermediate Care promoted across the UK some of which are narrowly defined and others more loosely defined. It would therefore be helpful to agree a working definition of Intermediate Care for the group so all members are clear about the parameters of the term and share a common understanding.

2. The Oxford and Anglia Intermediate Care Project definition is:
   “Intermediate Care can be described as those services that do not require the resources of a general hospital but are beyond the scope of the traditional primary care team. This includes:
   - Intermediate care which substitutes for elements of hospital care (substitutional care) and
   - Intermediate care which integrates a variety of services for people whose health care needs are complex and in transition. (complex care)
   (Oxford and Anglia Intermediate care Project, 1997)

   This definition fits in quite neatly to the developing tradition of extended primary care teams in Scotland delivering a service either in the patients own home or as close to the patients own home as possible.

   A more recent generic definition has been used by the Change Agent Team which also indicates the broad range of services included is as follows:

   “A service provided on a short term basis at home or in a residential setting (usually about 6 weeks) for people who need some degree of rehabilitation and recuperation. It’s aims are to prevent unnecessary admission to hospital, facilitate early hospital discharge and prevent premature admission to residential care” (Making Connections, 2006)

3. **Key Characteristics of Services in Scotland**

   The key features of Intermediate Care in Scotland were discussed at the last Intermediate Care learning network meeting and it was agreed included:

   - Integrated and focused services,
   - Maximise Independent Living
   - Prevent unnecessary hospital admission
   - Support timely discharge
   - Focused on those whose needs are complex and in transition
   - Relevant to all adult care groups
   - Time limited and focused interventions according to the needs of the user
   - Provides an ongoing rehabilitative approach

   The services care be provided in a range of settings including:

   - Individuals own homes
   - NHS Day hospitals and LA day centres
   - Designated residential and nursing homes
   - Community Hospitals
Examples of Intermediate Care services can include:

- Community assessment and treatment teams
- Joint community rehabilitation teams
- Rapid response services
- Intensive care at home schemes
- Extra care housing developments
- Alternative use of residential and nursing home provision
- Innovative use of community hospital facilities
- The work of extended primary care teams

4. **Recommendations**

The Intermediate Care learning network adopt the broad generic definition of Intermediate Care outlined in this paper as a working brief for the group.