

Planning for Your Discharge:

A checklist for patients and caregivers preparing to leave a hospital, nursing home, or other health care setting

DRAFT



Planning for Your Discharge

During your stay in a hospital, nursing home, or other health care setting, the staff will be working with you to plan for your discharge. You and your caregiver are important members of the planning team. (Caregivers are family members or others who will be helping you after discharge.) Below is a checklist of important things you should know when planning for a safe discharge.

Instructions:

- Review the checklist early and often during your stay.
- Talk to the staff (for example, a discharge planner, social worker, or nurse) about the items on the checklist.
- Check the box next to each item you complete.
- Use the notes page to write down important information that you need to remember.
- Skip any items that do not apply to you.

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|-----------|--|---|--|
| 1. | Do you know where you will get care after you are discharged? It may be at home, or in another setting. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask the staff to explain your options and make sure they understand your wishes. | <input type="checkbox"/> Patient | <input type="checkbox"/> Family member or other caregiver |
| 2. | Do you understand your health condition(s)?
Ask what is likely to happen with your health. | <input type="checkbox"/> Patient | <input type="checkbox"/> Family member or other caregiver |
| 3. | Do you know what each of your prescription drugs does? Do you know how to take them, and what side effects to watch for? Ask who you should call if you have questions. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tell the staff what prescription drugs, over-the-counter drugs, or supplements you took before you came to the hospital or other health care setting. Ask if you should still take them after you leave. | <input type="checkbox"/> Patient | <input type="checkbox"/> Family member or other caregiver |
| 4. | Do you know what medical equipment (like a walker) you will need? Ask who to call if you have questions about your equipment after you leave. | <input type="checkbox"/> Patient | <input type="checkbox"/> Family member or other caregiver |

5. Do you know what signs and symptoms to watch for? Ask what to do and who to call if you have these symptoms. **Patient** **Family member or other caregiver**

6. Do you know what doctor to call if you have questions or problems? Write down the doctor's name and telephone number. **Patient** **Family member or other caregiver**

7. Do you know what doctors appointments and tests you will need in the next several weeks? **Patient** **Family member or other caregiver**

8. Do you have written discharge instructions that you can understand and a summary of your current health status?

- Bring this information with you to your follow-up appointments.

 Patient **Family member or other caregiver**

9. Do you know which of the items below you will need help with and for how long?

- Bathing, dressing, grooming, using the bathroom.
- Shopping for food, making meals, doing housework, paying bills.
- Getting to doctors appointments, picking up prescription drugs.
- Doing other tasks like using medical equipment and changing a dressing or giving a shot.

 Patient **Family member or other caregiver**

10. Item for the family member or other caregiver: Do you understand what help the patient will need from you? (This may be some or all of the items from Question 9.) Are you able to give that help?
 Not applicable **Family member or other caregiver**

- If you aren't able to give that help, ask the staff to change the discharge plan so the patient gets the help he or she needs.

11. Do you know how to do the tasks that you will need to do? (This may be some or all of the items from Question 9.) Ask someone to teach you how to do those tasks. Show the person who teaches you that you can do those tasks. **Patient** **Family member or other caregiver**

12. If you will get services from a home health agency, compare the agencies in your area.

- Visit www.medicare.gov/HHCompare/Home.asp on the web. People with Medicare can also call 1-800-MEDICARE. TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.

Patient

Family member or other caregiver

13. If you will get services in a nursing home, compare the nursing homes in your area.

- Visit www.medicare.gov/NHCompare/Home.asp on the web. People with Medicare can also call 1-800-MEDICARE. TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.
- If possible, visit the nursing homes in your area. A tip sheet on what to look for when visiting a nursing home can be found at www.medicare.gov/Nursing/Checklist.pdf on the web.

Patient

Family member or other caregiver

14. The back of this checklist has the names of agencies that can offer you and your caregiver more support. Find information on the following:

- Community resources to help you live at home.
- Other resources to help you make long-term care decisions.

Patient

Family member or other caregiver

15. Do you understand how much of your prescription drugs, equipment, and services will be covered by your insurance?

Patient

Family member or other caregiver

*** Important note:** If you are a person with Medicare and you feel you are being asked to leave a hospital or other health care setting too soon, you may have the right to ask for a review of the discharge decision by an independent reviewer called a Quality Improvement Organization (QIO). The QIO can explain your appeal rights. To get the number for the QIO in your state, call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.

Important Information

The publicly-funded agencies below can give you and your caregiver more information on community services and support, like home-delivered meals and rides to appointments. They can also help you to make other long-term care decisions.



Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs)

AAAs assist adults age 60 and older and their caregivers. To find the AAA in your area, call The Eldercare Locator at 1-800-677-1116 weekdays from 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. (EST) or visit www.eldercare.gov on the web.

Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs)

ADRCs assist people of all incomes and ages. Forty-three states have ADRCs. To find out if your area is served by an ADRC, visit www.adrc-tae.org on the web.

Centers for Independent Living (CILs)

CILs assist people with disabilities. A state-by-state directory of CILs can be found by visiting www.ilru.org/html/publications/directory/index.html on the web.

State Technology Assistance Project

The State Technology Assistance Project has information on medical equipment and other assistive technology. Contact the Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America (RESNA) at (703) 524-6686 to get the contact information for your state or visit www.resna.org/taproject/at/statecontacts.html on the web.

State Medicaid Agency

The State Medical Assistance (Medicaid) office provides assistance to people with Medicaid. To find the contact information for your local office, visit www.medicare.gov on the web, or call 1-800-MEDICARE and say "Medicaid" to get their telephone number. TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.

Medicare

Medicare provides assistance to people with Medicare. Call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048. Or, visit www.medicare.gov/LongTermCare/Static/Counseling.asp on the web.

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***This checklist isn't a legal document. The official Medicare program provisions are contained in the relevant laws, regulations, and rulings.**