

Discharge Team
Patient Information

 Health & care
information
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Member

Information

If you need this information in large print, easy read, on audiotape or in another language please call 0800 7838058 or e-mail pals@dchft.nhs.uk

If you wish to obtain a list of the sources used to develop this information leaflet please call 0800 7838058 or e-mail patient.info@dchft.nhs.uk

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Planning for your discharge or transfer

What you need to know about leaving hospital ...

Your Estimated Date for Discharge is:

Introduction

This leaflet is intended to help and support you, your relatives, carers and friends to understand how your discharge or transfer from this hospital will take place.

Hospital is the right place to be now because you need specific medical and surgical treatment. However, once this is complete it is important that you leave hospital in a planned and timely manner because:

- a prolonged hospital stay can make it harder to readjust to your pre-admission lifestyle and activities
- there is an increased risk of picking up an infection whilst you are in hospital

We will help you to start thinking about your return home either before admission if you are having planned surgery or on the day of admission if you have been admitted as an emergency patient.

We will:

- assess what support you need on discharge including any special equipment you may need
- make sure our staff speak to your relatives, carers and/or relevant staff who will be helping you when you leave
- make sure that other health and social care teams who may be taking over your care. e.g. GP, District Nurses, Community Rehabilitation Teams know in time

We would like you to raise any concerns you have about your discharge with the ward staff as soon as you can.

What will happen if I need some help at home when I leave hospital?

There are a number of services that we might be able to use to help you get home:

Physiotherapy

Physiotherapy staff will advise you about managing with moving around and any mobility aids that you may need when you leave hospital.

Occupational Therapy

Occupational Therapy staff will advise you about coping with everyday tasks when you return home. They may also advise you about any equipment you may need on discharge.

Adult Social Services

Adult Social Services staff can, with your agreement, carry out an assessment of your needs to determine whether you are eligible for any support services. They can help and advise on what support may be available to you when you leave the hospital.

If you have a carer who provides support to you they may be entitled to an assessment of their needs. Social Service staff can also provide information about local services and organisations.

There is a charge for most services provided by Adult Social Services, but your contribution will depend upon your financial circumstances and the services you require. Adult Social Services staff will be happy to explain this.

Your written consent will be required in order that your details may be given to the Adult Social Services Team for their involvement.

Your Medicines

The pharmacy team are available on the ward to answer any medicines related questions.

Prior to going home the doctors and pharmacy team will work closely together to ensure your medicines are appropriate and supplied to you in a timely manner.

If you have any questions about your medicines after discharge please call the Medicines Helpline on telephone 01305 255171. The service is free and confidential. The helpline is run by Pharmacists at Dorset County Hospital.

What sort of questions can we answer?

- How should I take my medicine?
- How long should I take this medicine for?
- Can this medicine cause a particular side effect?
- I have missed a dose, what should I do?

If you have an urgent question about your medicines, or your medicines are making you feel unwell, please contact your GP. If your surgery is closed call NHS 111 free 24/7 (just dial 111) to access the out of hours GP service for Dorset.

What if I am not able to go directly back to my own home?

Transfer to Community Hospitals

Sometimes patients need further assessment and rehabilitation but do not need to stay in an acute hospital. It may be suggested that you could go to a Community Hospital. We cannot guarantee that a bed will be available in your nearest Community Hospital so you will be transferred to a Community Hospital with a bed available. If a bed later becomes available in a hospital nearer to your home, the doctors caring for you can consider your transfer there.

Please note that unfortunately transfers do sometimes happen at short notice and this is unavoidable.

There is a waiting list for Community Hospitals and it is not unusual for patients to recover in our hospital and go home before a bed is available. If this happens we will support you in your discharge to your own home.

What if I am not able to return to my own home at all?

If you are giving up your home to go to live in a Residential or Nursing Home you or your relatives will be given information and support to make the right choice for you. If a bed at the home you choose is not available we will identify an appropriate interim home for you to move to for a short while. This makes sure that we always have enough beds for acutely ill patients being admitted to the hospital. Please be aware there are no exceptions to this policy.

If you have been declared medically/surgically fit for discharge and you or your relatives fail to make arrangements for you to leave hospital, even though every effort has been made to support you, the Trust may have no alternative but to take legal action.

Next Steps

We will keep you and your carers informed about discharge by estimating the time that you are likely to stay in hospital. Please ask the doctors or nursing staff if you have not been given this information.

It is important that you know when we think you will be discharged so that you can make any necessary arrangements, which may include:

- Transport home. We always plan to discharge patients from hospital early in the day so it would be helpful if you could organise your travel in good time as otherwise it can delay your discharge. If it is not possible for you to make your own arrangements please inform the ward staff as soon as possible.
- Please make sure you have suitable clothing and footwear to wear for the time of year
- Remember you will need a key to get into your property
- Adequate food in your home
- Adequate heating in your home

On the day of discharge we will transfer you to the Discharge Lounge before 12 noon where your transport can collect you. The staff there are trained to continue your care, hot drinks are available at all times and meals or snacks can be provided. The Discharge Lounge is situated on the ground floor in the South Wing close to Entrance 2. There is a free parking/pick-up point next to the entrance.

If you have any queries regarding the information in this leaflet, please raise them with any member of the ward team that is caring for you.

Information and advice

For further information and advice contact the Ward Sister, Matron or Adult Social Services via the main hospital telephone number.

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Notes