



Planning for your discharge

You have been admitted to Dorset County Hospital (DCH) as you have a medical condition that requires treatment.

Once you have received your treatment and you no longer need a bed in the hospital, you are ready to leave DCH and can be discharged.

Most patients are able to go straight home from the hospital, but you may need some extra support as part of your recovery. You might need to go to another care provider, such as a community hospital, for further assessment of your ongoing care needs.

You could also need rehabilitation or other support to enable you to fully recover, and this will be discussed with you. Your ongoing assessment and support, either within your home or somewhere else, is called the 'Discharge to Assess' process.

Getting you to the best place for your recovery

An acute hospital like DCH is not the best place to fully recover – it is busy, noisy and unfamiliar. We try to ensure you go home or to another care provider as soon as possible so that you can recover with the support you need in a more suitable environment.

Staying in hospital for longer than necessary could result in you losing muscle strength, reduce your ability to remain independent and possibly expose you to infection. Leaving hospital when you are ready is best for you, and will also free up a bed for someone who needs to be admitted for hospital care.

You and your family will remain fully involved in discussions around your discharge.

Most patients will be discharged from our Discharge Lounge, which is run by our clinical staff alongside colleagues from voluntary organisations and the discharge team.

If you have any concerns, please speak to anyone in your ward team or the Discharge Lounge - they are all there to help make sure your discharge goes smoothly on the day.

Community support

We work closely with voluntary organisations who work with groups across Dorset. They can provide a range of services you may need at short notice, such as shopping or medication collection, as well as some general support when you first come home from hospital.

You can contact a voluntary organisation called Help and Kindness for support and advice through their Community Response service on 01305 59 59 58, or visit www.dorsetcommunityresponse.co.uk

Tell us what you think

We are really grateful for feedback from patients so we can make changes and improvements to our services. Please use this QR code to access an online survey to give us your thoughts about your care.



You can also contact our Patient Experience Team if you would like to talk anything through on 0800 7838058 or PALS@dchft.nhs.uk

Information we need from you

We want to make sure that when you leave hospital we have a clear plan in place with you and your relatives and carers.

We will start to gather information to help with discharge planning from when you are admitted. This helps us to ensure everything is in place when you are well enough to leave us.

If there is anything you think we need to know to ensure you have everything you need when you are discharged from the hospital, please do speak to us as soon as you can, or ask a relative, friend or carer to speak to the staff on the ward.

Talk to a member of staff on your ward if you have any concerns which may delay your discharge from hospital.

Tell us who you want to be involved in planning for you to leave hospital. This could be a relative, carer or friend.

Transport home

You will need to arrange your own transport when you leave hospital wherever possible. If you do not have anyone who can help you to get home, please tell the ward staff as soon as possible so that we can assist with arranging transport.

Arrangements for your ongoing care

You may need to go elsewhere to continue your recovery and further assessment of your ongoing care needs. This could be a community hospital or a care home provided by one of our healthcare partners.

If you need it, we will find an appropriate community bed for you as soon as one becomes available – however, due to the high demand, this may not always be in your preferred location.

This will be the only bed we can offer you, but please bear in mind you will only stay there for a short time to allow you to continue your recovery.

You will always have the right to decline the care offered to you, but please be aware that if you do turn down the support offered, you will then have to arrange and fund your own care on discharge.

You cannot wait in hospital after your medical team confirms you no longer need to be there as we have to free up beds for other patients who need to be admitted.

Leaving Hospital

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