

# HEADING HOME FROM HOSPITAL

A guide for adult patients, family and carers



When the team caring for you feel you no longer need to remain in hospital they will help you make plans to leave and will talk to you about your 'discharge', usually within 24 hours of your admission; you will not be able to remain in hospital once the decision has been made that you are ready to leave. It is not good for patients to remain in hospital past this date and can make recovery slower.

This leaflet will help you to understand what should happen when you are ready to leave hospital.

## While you are in hospital:

The clinical team caring for you will review your care daily and ensure your care plan is updated. Where possible you, and your family/carers, will be involved in these reviews. Make sure you ask the following questions:

- What is wrong with me? What are you considering?
- What is going to happen this morning, this afternoon and tomorrow morning?
- If all goes to plan, and there are no complications or delays, when can I go home?
- What needs to happen for me to go home?

## When you are ready to leave hospital:

Most people go home when they are ready to leave hospital and are discharged in the morning wherever possible. The team who have been caring for you will make sure any health or personal care that you need will be ready to start; if there is a delay in the start of this care, you will be moved to an interim placement as a short term measure. A social worker or member of the hospital team will talk to you about your care needs when you leave hospital and explain the assessment options available to you. They will assist you to make the right decisions about your care:



- You may need help to do everyday things like washing, dressing and shopping when you leave hospital
- Your local authority adult social care service has a duty to make sure your care needs are met but not all of these services are free.
- You may have an ongoing health need when you leave hospital.

If you have an ongoing health need when you leave hospital you may be eligible for NHS Continuing Healthcare which is a free package of care arranged and funded by the NHS.

- You may need some new equipment installed in your home to make things easier for you. If you do need some equipment to help you when you get home the hospital team will arrange this before you leave but you won't be able to wait in hospital while the work is carried out.
- You can ask for your family or carers to be involved in any assessment

of your care needs; you can also ask for a carer's assessment if someone you know is caring for you to make sure they are getting the right support. Attendance of family / carers at the assessments will not be allowed to delay the process and they will have to fit with the dates set

Some questions to ask about arranging your personal care after leaving hospital:

- How can I arrange to get the personal care I need?
- Will I be able to manage without making changes to where I live? Are there people I can contact to help make any changes?
- Where would I get equipment from and who can help and advise me on this?
- Will you make arrangements for the right people to come to see me?

Before you leave the hospital, you may be transferred to a waiting area called a 'Discharge Lounge'. You will be kept comfortable and offered meals and snacks until you leave to go on to your discharge destination.

## Leaving the hospital:

When you are ready to leave the hospital please arrange your own transport home wherever possible. You could ask your family/friends/carers to collect you or you could arrange a taxi.

Some people will need to leave hospital in an ambulance but the hospital team will decide if this is necessary and make the arrangements.



- Make sure you collect all your belongings from around your bed.
- Make sure you collect anything valuable you may have stored in the hospital safe.

Before you leave make sure you collect the following from the hospital team:

- A letter about your stay in hospital – your GP will also receive a copy.
- Your medicines – the team will speak to you about these and make sure you understand what they are for and when you should take them.

## When you get home from hospital:

Ask your family, friends or neighbours to have some food and supplies ready for when you get home. Also ask them to put the heating on if the weather is cold. If you need it, there is a free service called Welcome Home from Hospital who can visit you at home after you leave hospital – please ask the hospital staff if you would like this help.

## Any questions:

If you have any questions about any of the information in this leaflet, please ask any member of the team caring for you for some help.

You can also get this information in other formats:

- Braille
- Large print
- Audio.

If you would like to receive this leaflet in an alternative format please contact us: [patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk) or telephone 01223 216032.

## Useful contacts:

- Medicines Helpline  
Tel: 01223 274 616 Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm  
Web: [www.cuh.nhs.uk/services/pharmacy](http://www.cuh.nhs.uk/services/pharmacy)
- Care Network Cambridgeshire  
Tel: 01954 211 919 Web: [www.care-network.org.uk](http://www.care-network.org.uk)
- Healthwatch Cambridgeshire  
Tel: 0330 355 1285 Web: [www.healthwatchcambridgeshire.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchcambridgeshire.co.uk)
- Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust  
Tel: 01223 245151 Web: [www.cuh.nhs.uk](http://www.cuh.nhs.uk)
- North West Anglia NHS Foundation Trust  
Peterborough and Stamford Hospitals - 01733 678000  
Hinchingsbrooke Hospitals - 01480 416416  
Web: [www.nwangliaft.nhs.uk](http://www.nwangliaft.nhs.uk)
- Cambridgeshire County Council - Adult Social Care  
Tel: 0345 045 5200 Web: [www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk)
- Peterborough City Council  
Tel: 01733 747474 Web: [www.peterborough.gov.uk](http://www.peterborough.gov.uk)