

# Planning for Your Care After You Leave the Hospital

## Planning for Success

Many patients don't want to be in the hospital. They would rather recover in their own homes.

During your hospital stay, your health care team will:

- provide the best medical care possible
- help you get back into your home
- identify what you need for care
- work to keep you from coming back to the hospital.

Your long-term success depends on making the right choices after you leave the hospital. Finding the right care, in the right place and at the right time will help you get back to your regular routine.

## Planning for Discharge

Making discharge plans for leaving the hospital is an important part of your recovery. And it will begin as soon as your hospital stay starts.

Together, you, your family members and your health care team will create your discharge plan to help you have a smooth transition back to your home or community after your hospital stay.

## Leaving the Hospital

Your doctor and health care team will decide when you are ready to leave the hospital. Their goal is to make sure you are prepared to have long-term success.

### Home

You can return home if you can take care of basic needs on your own or with help from a family member or friend. These needs include: getting in and out of bed, walking to the bathroom, and making meals.

### Home With Home Care

You may be able to return home but need extra care. Home care offers the support, knowledge and care to help keep you living in your home. Services may include:

- physical or occupational therapists to help you with walking or show you exercises to get stronger
- home health aides to help you with tasks such as cooking, bathing and light cleaning
- nurses, who will help teach you or your family how to change your dressing, check your home medicines and monitor your health.

## ❑ Short-term Rehab Care

Short-term rehab care provides extra help and services you can't get at home. For example, you may need physical therapy after knee surgery or speech therapy after a stroke.

A health care team will work with you and your family until you can safely return home. You will receive care tailored for your recovery. Services may include:

- weekly visits from a doctor or nurse practitioner
- nursing care
- physical, occupational or speech therapy.

Short-term rehab care is also known as transitional care.

When you work on your discharge plan, your health care team will help you and your family to choose the facilities that can meet your needs, and help you work with your insurance provider.

## ❑ Long-term Care

If you need long-term care, your health care team members will talk with you and your family about resources in your community.

## ❑ Palliative Care

If you have a long-term or advanced disease, palliative care may be an option. It treats pain and other physical symptoms, as well as emotional and spiritual concerns.

Your health care team will help you and your family understand your illness, goals and treatment choices, and help you with financial and community resource options.

## ❑ Hospice Care

Hospice is a special way of caring for you if you have a disease for which there is no cure.

Your health care team will treat your physical, emotional and spiritual needs, focus on your comfort and the highest quality of life possible (known as comfort care), and help your family members.

## Follow-up Visits

You may have appointments already made for you to see your regular health care provider or a specialist after you leave the hospital. It is important to keep all follow-up visits, even if you feel well.