

What is 'Outpatient Status' in the Hospital?

What Does Your Status at the Hospital Mean?

When you come to the hospital for care, you are given a status. This affects how much you pay for services.

There are three types of status:

- **inpatient:** Your doctor writes an order for you to stay in the hospital as a result of an accident or illness, or for surgery and recovery.
 - An example is a total hip replacement.
- **observation:** Your doctor would like to watch you to determine if you can return home or if your status should change to inpatient.
 - Examples are tests to find out what's causing chest pain, weakness, dizziness, back pain or asthma.
- **outpatient:** You come to the hospital for a day surgery or procedure, lab tests, X-rays or Emergency Department services.
 - Examples are a colonoscopy or a procedure to look for blocked arteries.

For each status, you may need to stay in the hospital overnight or for more than one day.

You are currently on outpatient status. You will receive all the care you need.

Why Does This Status Matter?

Medicare and other insurance providers require hospitals to place patients in a hospital status.

This is based on health history, current health issues, signs and symptoms, medical needs and insurance requirements.

For more about insurance coverage, see the section called "What Does Insurance Cover?"

The hospital's social worker or care coordinator will talk with you about your insurance options.

What Can You Expect While You are in the Hospital?

- Your health care team may give you tests and lab work, special services and medicine.
- You may be able to have family members stay with you. This will depend on your health.
- Ask your nurse if you have any questions about eating, taking medicines or doing activities.

Your health care team will work with you to understand the needs you may have after your hospital stay. This will help your team work toward a plan to make sure you have the right care and support to help manage your health after you leave the hospital.

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What Does Insurance Cover?

Coverage varies, depending on your insurance provider(s). You may have deductibles or copays (what you owe) or other fees.

The hospital financial counselor can check your insurance benefits.

- The time you spend as an outpatient doesn't count toward Medicare's required 3-day inpatient hospital stay before going to a skilled nursing facility or transitional care unit.
- Outpatient status won't affect any home or community-based care services you are receiving. You will still receive those services.
- For your safety, you will not be able to use your medicines from home. You will receive the medicines you need while you are at the hospital.

Some medicines you receive while on outpatient status may not be covered by your insurance. Ask your financial counselor for more information.

Whom to Ask About Your Insurance Coverage Questions

- Your hospital's social worker or care coordinator.
- Your hospital's financial counselor.
 - Abbott Northwestern Hospital: 612-863-4385
 - Allina Health Faribault Medical Center: 507-332-4764
 - Allina Health United Hospital – Hastings Regina Campus: 651-404-1681
 - Buffalo Hospital: 763-684-1212
 - Cambridge Medical Center: 763-688-9460
 - Mercy Hospital: 763-236-7900
 - Mercy Hospital – Unity Campus: 763-236-4561

- New Ulm Hospital: 507-217-5684
- Owatonna Hospital: 507-977-2000
- River Falls Area Hospital: 715-307-6411
- St. Francis Regional Medical Center: 952-428-2569
- United Hospital: 651-241-5340

Other resources you can call for more information are:

- your insurance company
- Minnesota Senior LinkAge Line®: 1-800-333-2433
- Office of the Ombudsman for Long-Term Care: 651-431-2555 or 1-800-657-3591 (mnaging.net)
- Office of the Ombudsman for State Managed Care Programs: 651-431-2660 or 1-800-657-3729 (dhs.state.mn.us/managedcareombudsman)
- Beneficiary and Family Centered Care Quality Improvement Organization: 1-855-408-8557 (for all appeal requests and quality of care concerns)
- Wisconsin:
 - 1-800-362-2320 (MetaStar): Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Friday mornings
 - 1-800-748-6773 (HealthInsight): Friday afternoons, weekends and holidays
- Medicare: 1-800-633-4227 or 1-877-486-2048 (TTY)
- Allina Health: 612-262-9000 or 1-800-859-5077 (or visit allinahealth.org/billing)

Your financial counselor, social worker or care coordinator can help you work with the resources listed above.

allinahealth.org