

# Getting ready to leave hospital: returning home or moving to another place of care

## (updated guidance April 2022)

***From April 25 2022, the process for supporting you to leave hospital in Dorset has changed. This follows a change in national guidance and measures that were put in place to support the COVID 19 pandemic.***

***You may have received different information if you were admitted before April 25 2022. This information supersedes that guidance.***

### **INTRODUCTION**

This leaflet explains how we will help you to prepare to leave hospital, and what support you might expect after you have left.

### **WHEN WILL I LEAVE HOSPITAL?**

The team caring for you will advise you when you no longer need hospital care. It will be in your best interest to return home or to another place of care to continue your recovery.

### **WHY CAN'T I STAY IN HOSPITAL?**

- When you no longer need hospital care, it is better for you to continue your recovery elsewhere.
- 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 is very unwell and needs hospital care.

### **PLANNING YOUR RECOVERY**

- We will always try to ensure that you are in the right place at the right time for the best recovery possible. Throughout your stay, we will be planning with you and your family/carers for what will happen when you no longer need hospital care.
- Planning for your discharge will start as soon as you arrive in hospital. The team caring for you during your hospital stay will keep you and your family up to date on your Expected Date of Discharge (EDD). They will be able to explain what needs to happen in order for you to be discharged when you no longer need to stay in hospital.
- The best place for you to recover is usually your own home, with the support of your family, friends and local community if you need some extra support at first. There may also be equipment that can help you achieve tasks independently.
- If you need more care and support than your family, friends and local community can provide, we will discuss with you the support options that might be available when you leave hospital.

### **WHAT SUPPORT WILL I RECEIVE WHEN I LEAVE HOSPITAL?**

- Most people will regain their independence with help from family, friends and neighbours, or with voluntary and community support.
- If you need a further period of short-term support to aid your recovery, you may be able to access local health and social care services to provide this
- If you need long-term care and support, the full assessment of your needs will usually happen after your discharge from hospital. You will be contacted by the relevant team to arrange this.
- The team involved with your discharge will guide you through the process and help you to make an informed decision on the options that are available to you
- You will not be able to remain in hospital if you decide not to accept the assessed options.

### **WILL I HAVE TO PAY?**

- NHS care is free, whether it is delivered in a hospital or in another place.
- Most adult social care services are not free – it depends on a person’s finances and ability to pay. If you already had social care support in place before you went into hospital, these arrangements will continue when you are discharged.
- If you previously paid for your care, or contributed towards its costs, you will continue to do so.
- How much you contribute will depend on what you require and be decided after an assessment of your finances. If you have more than £23,250 in savings, you will have to pay the full cost of your care. Or if you have less than £23,250 in savings, but a weekly income that is high enough to cover the cost of your care, you will also have to pay the full cost

### **HOW CAN I HELP?**

- You can help us to help you in lots of different ways.
- Tell us if you feel you are at risk of harm or abuse.
- Tell us if there are family, friends, neighbours and people in your community available to help you, and who you are happy for us to speak with on your behalf.
- Join in discussions about how we can help you to become as independent as possible. This could involve using aids, equipment and technology, or other adjustments to your home, to make you safer.
- Tell us promptly if your circumstances change or if you no longer need support. If you have a relative or carer you want involved in discussions about your discharge and home support, please let us know.
- if you have questions or concerns, please speak to staff on the ward or the health and social care team supporting you.

### **WHO CAN I CONTACT?**

Before you leave hospital, we will confirm the arrangements in place for you. We will also advise who you should contact after you have left hospital if you need to speak to someone about your care needs.

For more information about social care and support in your area, go to:

[www.dorsethealthcare.nhs.uk/home-first](http://www.dorsethealthcare.nhs.uk/home-first)

If you don’t have access to a computer, please speak to a member of hospital staff and they will provide details in paper form.

We can supply this information in other formats, in larger print or have it translated for you.

Please contact Dorset HealthCare on 01202 277000.

Our Dorset is a partnership of local health and social care