



Hospital Admission and Discharge

HOSPITAL ADMISSION AND DISCHARGE

Sometimes a hospital stay is planned and sometimes people are admitted as an emergency. The hospital stay may only be for a day or two or perhaps for a longer period. Whatever the situation it helps if you can be prepared for the possibility of a hospital stay. You may wish to consider the following points if you are expecting to go into hospital.

BEFORE YOU GO INTO HOSPITAL

Do you know how long you will be away from home?

Friends, family and neighbours will need to know this so that you can plan for your homecoming.

Consider the security of your home, especially if you live alone. Try to leave a key with a trusted neighbour or relative in case of emergencies. If you have a burglar alarm, does somebody know the code in case it goes off when you are not there?

Cancel milk, newspapers etc. If you are likely to be away for some time, ask a friend or neighbour to move your post from the doormat to somewhere out of sight of any of your windows. You can also ask the post office to re-direct your mail, for a small fee, to an alternative address.

Will your finances be affected?

If you are claiming benefits a stay in hospital may affect them. You may also find that you are entitled to more benefit after your hospital stay if your circumstances have changed. The Pension Service should be advised of your hospital admission as soon as possible to ensure that they can amend any benefits accordingly, contact them on 0345 6060265.

Do you look after a relative or friend? Will they be affected by your stay in hospital?

You may need to organise some support for them in your absence. Friends and family members may be available to lend a hand but for more personal care needs you may want to contact your GP or social worker. Help and Care can give you more information or make a referral to Social Services on your behalf. Contact Help and Care on 0300 111 3303.

The person you live with may also be worried about what will happen to you and may not understand what you will be going through. Try to discuss this as fully as possible. It is a good idea to have a plan of action in the event of you being away, even if you are not expecting to go into hospital. It is far better to be organised in case of an emergency.

Useful information: Help & Care Fact Sheets: Contact 0300 111 3303.

Factsheet – Help with shopping, personal care and housework.

Factsheet – Meals delivered to your home.

Factsheet – Shops that deliver, and Laundry Services.

Factsheet – Equipment for daily living.

Do you have any pets?

Even if you are not planning on being away for long you will need to ensure that pets will be looked after. Perhaps a relative or friend can look after them, or they may need to go to boarding kennels. Some animal charities may be able to offer help or advice.

The Cinnamon Trust may be able to help in some areas by fostering your pet while you are away. They may also be able to provide help with dog walking. For further information contact The Cinnamon Trust, 10 Market Square, Hayle, Cornwall, TR27 4HE, Telephone: 01736 757900 to find out about services in your area.

The RSPCA will only intervene if an animal has been abandoned as the result of its owner being admitted to hospital. They will take an animal to a rescue centre if it is clear that the animal is suffering from neglect.

Useful information: Help & Care Fact Sheet: Contact 0300 111 3303.

Factsheet – Choosing and caring for a pet.

Do you understand why you need to go into hospital and what you are going to have done?

If you are unsure about anything ask your doctor, nurse or specialist. If you still do not understand, don't worry, it may be that you need somebody else to explain it to you. You could also think about taking somebody else that you trust with you to see your consultant. Having somebody with you may help you to understand what is being said and remember to ask all the questions you have in mind. If you do not have anyone to take with you, ask the hospital if they have an advocate or someone independent who can come with you.

Help & Care offer a General Advocacy Service for people over 65 and who are resident in Bournemouth & Poole, and a General Advocacy Service for people aged over 50 in Christchurch, East Dorset, and Purbeck areas (this service is also available to people aged over 18 if they have a physical or sensory impairment or a long term health condition. For further information contact Help and Care by telephoning 0300 111 3303.



HELP & CARE CONTACT DETAILS

Help us to help you

As a charitable organisation Help & Care relies heavily on the donations and goodwill of the local community. However large or small, every gift makes a difference!

Please contact us using the contact details below if you would like information about:

- *How to make a one off donation or*
- *How to set up a regular monthly donation or*
- *How to remember us in your Will*

Help & Care contact details

Help & Care offer a range of services and factsheets to older people, carers, and disabled people across Dorset. If you would like to know more about our information and support services, Advocacy, and our Handiworks Plus services, or you would like a copy of this factsheet in your own language, large print, Braille, or on audio tape or compact disc please contact us on the details below.

By telephone: 0300 111 3303

By fax: 01202 432299

Opening hours are: Monday - Thursday 9am -5pm and Friday 10am - 4.30pm. Answering machine available outside these hours.

Textphone for hard of hearing: 01202 416047

Email: contact@helpandcare.org.uk

Website: www.helpandcare.org.uk

Use the "Contact" form within the website to let us know how best we can help you.

Contact by post: Help & Care, The Pokesdown Centre, 896 Christchurch Road, Bournemouth, BH7 6DL

You can also make an appointment to call in and see us at The Pokesdown Centre, Bournemouth.

This information has been researched and produced by Help & Care and was believed to be correct at the time of production. Inclusion does not imply a recommendation by Help & Care.

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WHEN YOU ARE IN HOSPITAL

When you arrive at the hospital, find out and write down the following information. You may wish to keep the information yourself or pass it on to friends and family.

- Which ward will you be on?
- What is the telephone number of the ward?
- Who is your consultant?
- What is your consultant's diagnosis of your condition?
- Who is your Named Nurse?
- On what date were you admitted?
- What is your expected date of discharge?
- Who is your Hospital Social Worker/Care Manager and how can they be contacted?

You should be able to find out this information from your Named Nurse on the ward, as this person is responsible for your care.

Will your relatives be able to visit?

Be sure to inform relatives of the correct visiting times whilst you are in hospital. Some hospital wards may restrict the number of visitors to a patient at busy times. Your spouse or partner may also have unrestricted visiting rights depending on your condition or the ward you are in.

If you receive Income Support or Pension Credit Guarantee, Income based Jobseeker's Allowance or if you are named on Tax Credit NHS Exemption Certificate you are entitled to help with the cost of your fares or petrol when you go into hospital and when you come out. You may also be entitled to help with these costs when you go to and from hospital as an out-patient for NHS treatment. Your next of kin may also be able to get help with travelling costs to visit you. Sometimes when carers are visiting the person they care for in hospital the carer is entitled to special parking concessions in the hospital car park. Ask the Matron or Senior Nurse on duty about this when you next visit.

How do I make a low income claim?

The NHS Low Income Scheme (LIS) may be able to assist you with NHS costs. The scheme covers:

- Prescription costs
- Dental costs
- Eye care costs
- Healthcare travel costs

- Wigs and fabric supports

You can apply for the scheme if your income, savings, investments or property (not including your home) do not exceed the qualifying capital limit of £16,000 or £23,500 if you live permanently in a care home.

Depending on your circumstances, you can receive “full help” (HC2 certificate) or “partial help” (HC3 certificate). You will qualify for full help if your income is less than or equal to the limit above or only exceeds these limits by no more than half the current prescription charge. If your income exceeds these limits, you may be entitled to partial help.

The rules governing who is eligible are broadly the same as those for Income Support. However, the assessment also takes into account council tax and housing costs, so you may also get help even though you don't qualify for Income Support.

You don't need to apply if you or your partner:

- Get Income Support
- Get income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Get income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Get Pension Credit Guarantee Credit
- Are named on or entitled to an NHS Tax Credit Exemption Certificate

as these benefits will already entitle you to help with NHS costs.

To apply for an HC2 or HC3 certificate you will need to complete an HC1 form and send it off in the envelope provided. You can obtain an HC1 form from Job Centre Plus offices, hospitals, your GP surgery, your optician or dentist. You can also make a claim and find further information by contacting 0345 850 1166 to speak to an adviser who can help you complete the form, send it to you to sign and return in the envelope provided. Information and online forms are also available at www.nhs.uk/nhsengland/healthcosts . Certificates are valid for between six months and five years, depending on your circumstances.

