



Discharge

Extent to which you felt ready to be discharged

QUESTION DEFINITION

This question measures how well the hospital prepared the patient for discharge and the patient's perception of their comfort level in leaving the hospital. You face the challenge of completing treatment in increasingly short periods of time. The patient or a family member may need to continue a treatment or recovery plan after the patient leaves. Staff must imbue patients with the capacity and confidence to manage post-discharge (either on their own or with the help of family or a home care agency). Therefore, preparations for discharge begin at or before admission.

IMPROVEMENT SOLUTIONS

- Reassure patient that they are healthy enough to manage at home, or they would not be discharged.
- Be certain a discharge plan has been prepared, discussed, and is understood by the patient.
- Train the patient to care for themselves (physically and emotionally) at home. (A separate question rates the information that was provided for this purpose.)
- Confirm that patient has acquired the skills/services to manage at home after leaving the hospital.
- Ask the patient if they have questions about what to do when they get home.
- Give the patient the name and telephone number of a person who can answer questions after they get home.
- Provide written instructions on what to do at home.
- Inform the patient of everything that is being done for them to arrange for home care equipment as it is being done. Keep them frequently updated on the progress of these arrangements.
- Evaluate the quality of patient education materials. Are they easily readable? Do they answer common questions (e.g., when can I resume activities, who do I contact if I have questions, etc.).
- Evaluate effectiveness of education. Is any post-test done?
- Tell the patient when they can expect to go home; tell the patient what must happen between now and when they are discharged.
- Ask about concerns regarding discharge. Address stated concerns (physician answered questions, nurse educates, etc.).
- Solicit any other remaining concerns. Ask if any questions or issues remain unanswered. Address whatever the patient brings up. Provide a pen and notepad titled "Questions to ask before I go home."



- Reassure patients and staff by promising and delivering post-discharge phone calls. Everyone's confidence in and satisfaction with care is enhanced when this step is taken to ensure a successful transition home.
- Provide patients with a pen and notepad titled "Questions to ask before I go home". Walk the patients through each item before they leave.
- Give patients a list of phone numbers the patient or family members can call if they have any questions once they get home.
- Perform regular audits to ensure that all discharge patients receive a discharge letter that is in line with service specifications.
- During the pre-admission process, inform the patient of the physical status they may expect to be discharged with. (e.g. most patients will need a cane to walk around when first discharged)
- Reassure patients that they are healthy enough to manage at home; otherwise they would not be discharged.
- If the patient needs to do any type of exercise when they are discharged, after explaining the exercise to them, have them demonstrate to ensure they understand what to do.
- Follow up on each discharge by calling patients to make sure they are doing okay. Be sure to tell the patient and their caregiver at discharge that you will be calling so they can keep track of their questions.
- Perform regular reviews of how the discharge process is handled by all members of staff involved.
- Provide education to patients so that they feel a sense of control and awareness of their own wellness and health outcomes.