

Patient information

A family carer's guide to planning for hospital discharge



Are you a Carer?

A family carer is someone of any age whose life is restricted because they are looking after another person who cannot manage without help because of illness, age-related frailty, mental health needs, substance misuse or disability. Family carers are not paid and do not always live with the person they care for. They may be caring for a friend, neighbour or relative.

Suffolk Family Carers

On admission to hospital

Your knowledge of the patient and your expertise in caring for them should be recognised by staff. With the patients permission you should be fully involved as an equal partner at all stages of their treatment including discharge decisions.

You have a choice about caring, no assumptions should be made - distinction should be made between being a person caring **about** someone and a person **providing care for** someone.

Please discuss with staff how we recognise you as a carer.

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Are you already a carer or is this a new situation for you?	New Carer	Already a Carer
Has someone asked if you provided help or support to the patient before admission?	Yes	No
Has someone asked you about your ability and willingness to provide care at home for the patient following discharge?	Yes	No

If you answer 'No' to any of these questions please speak to a member of the ward staff to discuss your carer's role and any concerns you may have in starting to provide care or continuing in your care.

During the hospital admission

Time to think about your own needs:

- ◆ Do you get enough sleep?
- ◆ Is your health affected in other ways?
- ◆ Are you able to get out and about?
- ◆ Do you get any time for yourself?
- ◆ Are your other relationships affected?
- ◆ Are you able to train or work?

Please let the ward staff know if any of the above relate to you, so your own needs are taken into consideration during discharge planning.

Have you been told the diagnosis and treatment plan of the patient and the long-term implications of their condition?	Yes	No
Have you received the training you need regarding:		
◆ Moving and handling	Yes	No
◆ Safe use of medical equipment	Yes	No
◆ Administering medications	Yes	No
◆ Contenance support	Yes	No
◆ Nutritional support	Yes	No
◆ Skin care	Yes	No
◆ What to observe for - changes in patient's condition	Yes	No

If you answer 'No' to any of these questions please speak to a member of ward staff.

Discharge Checklist

Have you been given reasonable notice that the person is coming home in order to get things ready, eg heating, food and essentials?	Yes	No	
Are all the agreed services to support you and the patient in place or do you know when they will be in place?	Yes	No	N/A
Has essential equipment been delivered?	Yes	No	N/A
Have arrangements been made as to how the patient will be transported home and been agreed with you?	Yes	No	Details
Are follow-up arrangements / appointments needed?	Yes	No	Details
You will be given a short supply of medication on discharge from hospital. When this is coming to an end please contact your GP.			

If you answer '**No**' to any of these questions, please ask a member of ward staff. Following discharge if you have any concerns in the first instance call your GP.

Please also see the 'Helpful Organisations' leaflet in your Family Carers Pack for details of organisations that may be able to offer support following discharge.

If you would like any information regarding access to the West Suffolk Hospital and its facilities please visit the hospital website www.wsh.nhs.uk and click on the link, or visit the disabledgo website:

<http://www.disabledgo.com/organisations/west-suffolk-nhs-foundation-trust/main>