FOR FAMILIES · GOING HOME

KG

Before discharge day, *check the home.*

"Safe discharge" is a judgment about a home, not a body. Stairs, bathrooms and who is there at 2am decide more discharges than diagnoses do.

IS HOME READY?

- ☐ **The building.** Stairs to the front door and to the bathroom, the width of doorways, and whether the bedroom is on the ground floor.
- ☐ **The help.** Who is there, how often, and whether they can physically assist.
- ☐ **The nights.** Who is there when everyone else is asleep. A plan that works from nine to five is not a plan.
- ☐ **The equipment.** The walker, commode or hospital bed delivered before arrival, not three days after.
- ☐ **The follow-up.** Appointments that exist, transport to them, and someone managing medications in week one.

BEFORE DISCHARGE DAY

- ☐ Confirm the date, and what is supposed to be delivered before it.
- ☐ Get the medication list and compare it with what they took before the hospital.
- ☐ Check that follow-up appointments exist and that someone can physically get the person to them.
- ☐ Ask what warning signs should trigger a call, and who to call, including after hours.
- ☐ Ask whether home health has been arranged, and when the first visit is.
- ☐ Walk the house first: move the rugs, clear the path, and put a light on the route to the bathroom.

THE DISCHARGE SUMMARY SHOULD COVER

☐ The diagnoses and what happened ☐ The medication list, with what changed and why ☐ Function at discharge

☐ Follow-up appointments ☐ Equipment ordered ☐ Warning signs to watch for ☐ Who to call

IF THE TIMING SEEMS WRONG

Medicare coverage is ending and you disagree	That is an appeal. It is free, and the deadline is short.
You think something clinical has been missed	Ask for a care plan meeting and name the specific problem, such as: "She cannot get to the toilet at night without help, and nobody is there after ten."

Choosing a facility or home health agency after a hospital stay? You have a right to quality data on the options, such as pressure ulcers, falls with injury and readmissions. You can also look them up on Medicare's Care Compare.

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Scan or visit · kevineugenegroh.com/rehab/discharge-planning-explained/

General education, not medical or legal advice. It does not create a patient–provider relationship. Practices vary by facility.
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