

**Planning together: leaving hospital when the time is right**

**This leaflet explains why it is important to start planning for you to leave hospital.**

**Why are we starting to plan for me to leave hospital?**

Our top priority is to help you get better and support you to leave hospital when the time is right. You will only leave hospital when you no longer need hospital care and it is safe to do so. It is important that, together, we start planning right away to ensure you leave hospital in a safe and timely manner.

In most cases, you will return home. You might need some additional care to help you in your recovery, or practical support such as help with shopping. If you are a care home resident you will most likely return to your care home. If you require more complex care and support this could be in another bed in a community setting.

**What might I expect?**

**Early conversations** – Soon after you arrive in hospital we will discuss and plan how you will be able to leave. We will involve your carers, family and/or friends in conversations if you would like them to be included.

**‘Expected date of discharge’** – Soon after you arrive in hospital you will be given an ‘expected date of discharge’ (expected date you will leave hospital) which will be reviewed during your stay.

**What matters most to you to be considered** – The team caring for you will ask ‘what matters most to you?’. They will ensure this is considered when planning for you to leave hospital.



**Looking after family or friends after they leave hospital?**

**This leaflet lists useful advice for family and friends of people needing ongoing care or support with day-to-day life.**

**What kind of support could you give someone**

Support may be in the home or remotely (e.g. by phone), such as:

* **Emotional support** like helping someone manage anxiety or mental health;
* **Housework** like cooking, cleaning or other chores;
* **Personal support** like help moving around, washing, eating or getting dressed;
* **Assistance with getting essential items** like medicine or food; or
* **Help to manage money, paid care or other services**

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If you are not able to care, and/or need help, then you have a right to a carer's assessment to have your needs considered too.

Check what your council or local authority can offer. Find their websites using the online postcode tool at [www.gov.uk/find-local-council](http://www.gov.uk/find-local-council). Services may change during the pandemic.

**What to consider if you are looking after someone**

1. **Get help from others with caring and everyday tasks:**

**Questions to ask during your hospital stay:**

1. What is the main reason I am in hospital for?
2. What is going to happen to me today and tomorrow?
3. What extra help might I need when I leave hospital?
4. When will I be able to leave hospital?
* **Go to the Carers UK and Carers Trust websites** for information about support available. Carers UK also have an online forum where you can speak to other carers, and a free helpline, open Monday to

Friday, 9am to 6pm on **0808 808 7777**. Carers UK website:

[www.carersuk.org/](http://www.carersuk.org/)



* **If you are employed, talk to your employer** about managing work whilst caring. You may be able to arrange flexible working and many employers offer other support to make things easier.
* **If you are at school, college or university, let them know you are caring for someone** so they can help you manage your studies. Carers Trust has lots of helpful advice for young people looking after family members or friends. Carers Trust website: [www.carers.org/](http://www.carers.org/)
* **Get specialist advice about caring** from condition-related organisations like Alzheimer’s Society, MIND and others. Also AgeUK: [www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/care/arranging-care/homecare/](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/care/arranging-care/homecare/)
* **Try not to do everything yourself!** Speak to friends and family about what others can do to help. Can they share any tasks?
1. **Look after your health as well as the person you support:**

It is important to look after your own health and wellbeing. Eat a balanced diet, get enough sleep and try to make time each day for physical activity. Even taking a few breaths can relieve stress and help you manage each day. Check out the NHS ‘Every Mind Matters’ website for more tips: [www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/](https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/). If your own health or the health of the person you support gets worse, with coronavirus or another illness, talk to your GP or call NHS **111**.

1. **Think ahead to make care manageable if things change:**

Write down what care the person needs and what others should do if you cannot continue providing care for any reason. It is important that others can easily find your plan and quickly understand what needs to be done if you aren’t there. Carers UK have advice on their website on how to make your plan.

1. **Read the Government guidance for unpaid carers:**

For more detailed advice on caring for friends or family during coronavirus search for **‘unpaid care coronavirus gov.uk’** online.

1. **Seek extra support from NHS Volunteer Responders:**

Carers as well as those they care for can get a range of help including with shopping and other support by calling **0808 196 3646**.