

# Preparing for Your Discharge at Humber River Health

**Discharge planning** is the process of preparing a patient to leave the hospital safely and smoothly.

At Humber River Health, these discussions will start at the beginning of your hospital stay. Once your healthcare team determines that you no longer need the **acute medical care** you came into the hospital for, you are ready for discharge.

**Acute medical care** is short-term, active treatment for an injury, illness, or urgent medical condition, or recovery from surgery.

## Read this handout to learn about:

- How discharge works at Humber River Health
- Where you may go after you leave the hospital
- What you need to do before leaving the hospital



## How does discharge work at Humber River Health?

Soon after we admit you to the hospital from the Emergency Department, your healthcare team will work with you, your family, and/or caregivers to develop your care goals for your hospital stay. We will also start to prepare you for **your discharge day**. This is the day when you will leave the hospital to return home or to continue your care at another facility.

Preparing for discharge can feel confusing and overwhelming, especially at the beginning of your hospital stay. However, starting these discussions and knowing your day of discharge as early as possible will:

- Give you, your family, and caregiver(s) time to ask questions, start your own planning, and explore your options.
- Help your healthcare team to arrange any follow-up care you may need in time for when you leave the hospital.

**Note:** During your stay, we may need to transfer you to a different unit or another site (such as the Reactivation Care Centres at Finch or Church site) that can meet your care needs better.

Your healthcare team will keep you informed of any possible transfers. No matter which site/hospital we transfer you to, your healthcare team will continue to work with you, your family, and/or caregivers to prepare you for when you leave the hospital.



## Who will help me get ready for discharge during my hospital stay?

During your stay, the following healthcare team members will be helping you meet your care goals and get ready for discharge.

### YOUR MEDICAL TEAM

These medical health professionals will help care for you in the hospital:

- **Attending Physician:** A doctor who is in charge of your care while you are in hospital. They also supervise the fellows, residents, or medical students who may also be involved in your care.
- **Resident or Fellow:** A doctor or clinician who is completing their training at the hospital.
- **Registered Nurses:** Nurses keep track of your health and well-being, and teach you about your illness or injury. They also supervise nursing students who may also be involved in your care. Each day, you may have 2 to 3 different nurses.

### OTHER MEDICAL STAFF

You may also meet with these medical staff:

- **Consulting Physician:** A specialist doctor who the Attending Physician has asked to give recommendations about specific aspects of your care. They also supervise the fellows, residents, or medical students who may also be involved with the consultation.
- **Physician Assistant:** A medically educated clinician who works with the doctors. They help assess and manage your health and medical needs while you are in the hospital.
- **Nurse Practitioner:** A nurse who has additional education and specialized training to assess and manage your medical needs and plan your care. They can diagnose conditions, order tests, interpret results, and prescribe medicines.

### OTHER HEALTHCARE TEAM MEMBERS

Depending on your needs, these other healthcare professionals may also be part of your care and help you prepare to leave the hospital:

- **Dietitian:** Helps make sure you are getting enough nutrition and hydration for your medical condition.
- **Occupational Therapist:** Helps you plan how to do everyday activities safely, such as eating, bathing, and getting dressed.
- **Physiotherapist:** Helps you plan how to be more independent by building your strength, balance, and coordination.
- **Social Worker:** Helps you manage your feelings and relationships. They can also help you plan for when you go home.
- **Speech-Language Pathologist:** Helps you with any problems talking or swallowing, if needed.
- **Home and Community Care Support Services staff:** Helps set you up with care in the community to support your transition home, or find you a long-term care home, if needed.



## Where will I go after I am discharged?

Depending on your care needs after the hospital, we may discharge you...



### HOME

Going home is typically the first choice for patients. This is the **“home first approach.”**

We will send you home with information on follow-up appointments, medicines you are going home with, and care instructions.

If you need care at home, Home and Community Care Support Services (HCCSS) will meet with you, your family, and/or caregivers while you are in the hospital to talk to you about your care needs. They can also suggest resources in the community that may be right for you.

They may contact you virtually, by phone, or in person, depending on your situation. Ask your healthcare team for more information.

**Note:** Once you know your day of discharge, you must arrange your own transportation home.

If you need help, ask your healthcare team for a list of phone numbers for transportation options, such as an ambulance, taxi, or wheelchair accessible taxi.

**Humber River Health does not pay for your transportation to leave the hospital.**



### TO A FACILITY OR CARE SITE

If your needs cannot be met at home, your healthcare team will work with you, your family, and/or caregivers to decide what type of facility or care site can best provide the care you need.

This may include:

- Inpatient rehabilitation
- A reactivation care centre
- A transitional care unit
- Complex continuing care
- Convalescent care
- A long-term care home
- A retirement home
- Supportive housing
- Palliative care
- A hospital in your local community

If you are eligible for one or more of these care sites, your healthcare team will help you apply to and transfer there.



## What happens if I need long-term care?

If a long-term care home is the most appropriate setting for your care needs, your healthcare team and an HCCSS placement coordinator will help you find one that can best meet those needs.

If your preferred home is full, we may need to place you in another long-term care home or another facility, such as a Transitional Care Unit, while you wait for a space to become available.



## Can I wait in hospital for a long-term care home?

Hospitals are not homes and are not designed to meet a person's supportive or rehabilitative needs. There is evidence that while you wait in hospital, without the social and recreational supports provided in settings such as long-term care, you could be at risk for physical and cognitive decline. You may also be at risk for hospital-based infections. Your timely admission into a long-term care home will ensure you get the health and personal care required to support your independence, safety and quality of life.

**Tip!** To avoid delays in moving to your chosen facility, make sure to engage early in discharge planning with your healthcare team. These early discussions can help prepare you to make decisions about your home of choice in a timely manner.



## Who do I speak to if I have questions or concerns about my discharge from the hospital?

Speak with any member of your healthcare team. We are here to support you.

### MY QUESTIONS:

Blank whiteboard area for writing questions.

**Tip!** The **whiteboard** in your room is a communication tool for both you and your healthcare team members. The team will regularly update this board about your treatments, plans for care, or plans for discharge.

Please use the whiteboard to post questions or other messages about any needs or preferences you want to share with your nurse, your doctor, or other healthcare team members.

Unit / Room	Telephone	Today's Date	Estimated Discharge
	(416) 242-1000 ext.		by 11 am
<b>My Care Team</b>	<b>Today's Care Plan and Activities</b>	<b>Special Care</b>	
Doctor			
Nurses			
Allied Health and Consultants			
	<b>My Pain Management</b>	<b>My Questions and Comments</b>	
	Are you in pain? Tell us how much.		
	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10		
	No Pain Mild Moderate Severe Very Severe Worst Pain		

Note: This handout was adapted with permission from a document developed by University Health Network.

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The information provided in this handout is for educational purposes. It does not replace the advice or specific instructions from your doctor, nurse, or other healthcare provider. Do not use this information to diagnose or treat. If you have questions about your own care, please speak with your healthcare provider.

**English:** This information is important! If you have trouble reading this, ask someone to help you.

**Italian:** Queste informazioni sono importanti! Se ha difficoltà a leggere questo, chiedi aiuto a qualcuno.

**Spanish:** ¡Esta información es importante! Si tiene dificultad en leer esto, pida que alguien le ayude.