

Hospital Discharge - Next Steps

Review

Three months after the publication of the Hospital Discharge Checklist we set out to evaluate its strengths and weaknesses and decide how it should move forwards.

Feedback on the checklist has been mixed. On the one hand the concept and content has been well received:

“...your discharge checklist is the way forwards...” “I wish it could be incorporated into the discharge paperwork we already have”.


However, there have also been challenges that have prevented the checklist being distributed and used as intended. The two key barriers are:

- Fit with existing hospital processes. It is hard for staff to remember to hand the checklist out; it replicates existing hospital paperwork; there is no clear moment in the discharge process for the checklist to be applied. “At the moment it will conflict with the process we have adopted ..., it needs to match our processes”
- The checklist is long with several pages to ‘fill out’ - it can be daunting for patients and for their families to complete.

The New Checklist

The checklist’s value is as a prompt to patients, ensuring they ask staff for important information before they are discharged from hospital. It needs to be shorter, simpler and more accessible so patients can identify at a glance the questions relevant to their situation.

We have therefore taken the most valuable questions in the checklist and produced a small toolkit of communications materials. These materials capture the essential questions in an at-a-glance form. They are available in hard copy as a small leaflet or poster, or electronically for inclusion in providers’ own publications.

A blue horizontal bar with rounded corners, containing contact information. On the left side, there is a green circular shape with a white cutout. On the right side, there is a pink circular shape with a white cutout.

Call: 0303 303 0023 Text: 07592 787 533 Email: enquiries@healthwatchesurrey.co.uk
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The New Checklist

Are you ready to go home?

Here are some questions to ask yourself before you leave hospital - if you are not sure about anything ask the staff for more information

- **Who knows I am coming home?** Will home be ready for me - will it be warm, will there be food? Do I have a key?
- When I get home are there **symptoms** I should be looking out for, and who should I contact if I notice these?
- Are there changes to my **medications**? Am I confident I understand what these medications are for and when to take them? Do I want these explained to someone I trust who can help me with them?
- Do I need to contact **my GP** about my hospital stay? What do they need to know?
- Do I know **what appointments to expect** after I've been discharged, and do I know who to contact about them?
- Do I know what **other services** will be helping me after I've been discharged? What do I do if they don't contact me?
- Will I need to **change the food I eat** or have a special diet?
- Will I need any **supplies** or clinical items? What happens when I need more of these?
- If I am going to need **more support** has this been arranged? What should I do if the support doesn't happen?
- If you are a carer, or if someone cares for you at home - have you or your carer had a new **carer's assessment** or been given a Surrey Carer's Prescription?