

Leaving hospital

Leaving hospital can be just as daunting as going into hospital for some people. This section gives information on what should happen when you leave hospital and some tips on how to prepare for your return home.

Hospital Discharge

If you've had a stay in hospital and are ready to be discharged, getting a bit of extra support can help to boost your recovery, re-build your confidence, and so give you a better chance of living safely at home again. Services called intermediate care or re-ablement services offer this type of support.

The process of leaving hospital once you are well enough is called hospital discharge. The staff on the ward should discuss your needs with you, and your relatives and carers, and will work with you to plan your discharge before you leave hospital.

You shouldn't be discharged from hospital until you are:

- declared medically fit by your consultant
 - have an assessment to look at the support you need to be discharged safely
 - given written information that sets out the support you'll get when discharged
 - it's safe for you to be discharged
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Practicalities

Clothes, keys and money

You need to make sure that you have clothes to go home in, including shoes and a coat. Often visitors can help by bringing in what you need from home.

Check that you have got your front door key and enough money for things like taxi fares. If you have any difficulties, talk to the person at the hospital who is overseeing your discharge, so that they can help you to sort things out.

Preparing the house for your return

Before you leave hospital, you might want to ask friends and family to help with things such as:

- switching the heating on
- making up your bed
- getting in basic food supplies, such as bread and milk
- preparing a meal for your return

You can make changes to your home so it is easier for you to move round. For example, moving your bed downstairs or fitting equipment that can [help prevent slips, trips and falls](#).

You can buy [special equipment](#) to help you, such as a bath seat or a walking frame.

[YourEquipmentNewcastle](#) helps you find and buy equipment to improve your daily living in just 3 steps.

[The British Red Cross](#) hire out small pieces of equipment, such as commodes and wheelchairs at a low cost.

Coming home from Hospital

The discharge process

It is important that your house is ready for your return. You may be worried that you've left your house in a mess, especially if you had to go into hospital unexpectedly. If this concerns you, maybe family, friends or neighbours can go in and tidy up for you.

It is the hospital's responsibility to ensure that you don't leave hospital unless adequate arrangements for your support at home have been made. You should be given the name and details of the person coordinating your discharge. They are sometimes called Discharge Coordinators or Ward Coordinators.

If you need ongoing support when you leave hospital, a discharge assessment may be carried out by a multidisciplinary team of professionals before you leave hospital. They will then draw up a care plan for you. Depending on your needs, the team could include a social worker, physiotherapist, occupational therapist, speech therapist, mental health nurse or dietitian.

If you would like help putting your views across during the assessment, you might want to have an [independent advocate](#) help you.

Support you might need

The types of support in your discharge care plan will depend on what support you need. It might include;

- [adaptations or equipment](#) to make your home safer and easier to live in
- [home care](#) or a personal assistant
- district nursing support
- a [personal alarm](#) so that you can call for help if necessary
- reablement services or intermediate care which help you to regain your independence and confidence and stay living at home

- an opportunity to meet people and socialise, such as at a day centre
 - a permanent place in a [care home](#)
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On the day of your discharge

The person arranging your discharge should make sure that you have:

- a copy of your care and support plan. Your [carer](#) will need a copy too.
- transport arranged to get you home
- carers available if needed
- notified your GP in writing
- any medication or other supplies you'll need
- been trained how to use any equipment, aids or adaptations needed
- appropriate clothes to wear
- money and keys for your home

If you are being discharged to a care home, the care home should also be told the date and time of your discharge and have a copy of the care plan.

Reablement Service

[The Reablement Service](#) is a free service that provides personal care and help with daily activities, usually for up to six weeks if you've just come out of hospital or following a crisis.

The service can help you regain your confidence and skills to carry out daily activities independently. Reablement can help with personal care such as bathing and dressing, help with daily living activities and other practical tasks such as preparing food.

Referrals to Reablement are usually made through a GP or through a Social Worker at [Community Health & Social Care Direct](#).

Rehabilitation Service

Rehabilitation is a short-term service at [Connie Lewcock Resource Centre](#) in Lemington. It is a 24 hour support service where you can stay for up to 6 weeks. Their specialised team support you to recover after leaving hospital. You will be assessed to find out if you need this support. They can help you to:

- become more independent
 - improve your mobility
 - help you to make choices
 - look after yourself
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Information and Advice

The team of staff who care for you in hospital should give you information and advice about your

particular medical condition, including things to do and things to avoid. They may also give you leaflets or recommend a self-help group that you can contact for further information.

Make sure that you understand what you have got to do; don't be afraid to ask for more explanation if necessary, or to ask for information to be written down. There is often lots to take in on the day you are discharged, so it can be helpful to have this sort of information written down for future reference.

If you would like further information, you can contact [NHS 111](#). They provide a 24-hour telephone health information and advice service.

The hospital staff will inform your GP that you have left hospital and will give them details of your discharge date, diagnosis, treatment and medication.

Your GP will also be told about the arrangements that have been made for your care. This information should be sent to your GP within 24 hours of you leaving hospital.

Medication

If you have any concerns about any of your medicines after leaving hospital, you can call the pharmacy department of the hospital where you were admitted or contact the ward that you stayed on for further advice.

If you are a patient of either Newcastle or Northumberland Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trusts, you can call their helplines to speak to someone about your concerns.

[Medicines Information Patient Helpline](#) (Newcastle NHS Foundation Trust)

[Patient Information Centre](#) (Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust).

Other useful information

- [Home Care](#)
- [Hospital Discharge Policy](#) from Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
- [Hospital discharge arrangements – Age UKs factsheet](#)
- [Helping you through a hospital stay: Advice from older people](#) – Social Care Institute for Excellence booklet
- [Hospital 2 home](#) – resource pack for professionals with a role in hospital discharge for older people
- Read our [Self care and disability](#) information which covers reablement and rehabilitation as well as living with a long term medical condition.

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Useful Organisations

[Patient Information Centre – Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS](#)

Foundation Trust (CNTW)

Website: www.cntw.nhs.uk

Telephone: 0191 246 7288

Address: St Nicholas Hospital, NE3 3XT

Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Website: www.newcastle-hospitals.org.uk

Telephone: 0191 233 6161

Address: Freeman Hospital, NE7 7DN

Medicines Information Patient Helpline

Email: drug.information@nuth.nhs.uk

Website: http://www.newcastle-hospitals.org.uk/services/pharmacy_medicines-information-patient-helpline.aspx

Telephone: 0191 233 6161

Connie Lewcock Resource Centre

Website: <http://www.newcastle.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/care-and-support-adults/types-care-services/short-term-rehabilitation-services/community-rehab-service>

Telephone: 0191 264 3439

Address: Connie Lewcock Resource Centre, NE15 7LQ

Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust

Email: patientinformationcentre@ntw.nhs.uk

Website: www.ntw.nhs.uk/pic

Telephone: 0191 223 2545

Address: Patient Information Centre, NE3 3XT

British Red Cross

Email: redcross.org.uk

Website: www.redcross.org.uk

Telephone: 0191 273 7961

Address: British Red Cross, NE4 8SR

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[Your Care: Financial assessments](#)

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[Getting to hospital](#)

[While you are in hospital](#)

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