



Information for hospital patients

Your discharge from hospital: what to expect

We are experiencing extraordinary times as we continue to work with the demands of the coronavirus pandemic, with all services across our area under significant pressure.

Your safety remains our top priority. Health and care agencies across Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire are working together to ensure that people are discharged from hospital safely as soon as they are medically well enough to leave.

Evidence shows that individuals recover better both physically and emotionally when in a setting that closely mirrors their home, among family or loved ones. We also need to make sure that our hospital beds are made available for people who are acutely unwell.

What does this mean in practice?

Your doctor will decide when you are well enough to leave hospital. You will not be expected to stay in hospital any longer than absolutely necessary. We will work with you, your family and friends to support your safe discharge home or into a community setting for ongoing rehabilitation if needed.

Discharge to your home:

- If you can be discharged home, we will be asking your family and friends to support this by being ready to collect you from hospital when we call. We know people are busy with work, childcare, or other commitments. While it might not always be convenient, a timely response from your family and friends means we can provide a hospital bed to an acutely unwell person who needs it.
- Your friends and family may be able to help us by letting us know what they can do to help on a regular basis, for example by preparing meals or helping with dressing and washing. Please ask your loved ones to talk to the team planning your care if you think they can help in any way, as this may mean you can go home a few days earlier. We can provide advice and training if this is helpful.

Discharge to an alternative community setting:

- Depending on your condition, you may need to be transferred to an alternative community setting to continue your recovery safely before you return home. This may mean a transfer to an NHS care home bed, or to one of our specialist community rehabilitation units. We are sorry that due to the



unprecedented demand for services, this may not be the facility nearest to your home.

- The team providing your care will discuss any additional therapy and/or care support needs with you. The discussion about alternative settings will only take place once your doctor has advised you are well enough to leave hospital.
- Transport will be arranged once the availability of a bed is confirmed.
- We will support you to keep in touch with loved ones including via digital technology if face-to-face visiting is not available due to infection prevention control measures in place to stop the spread of coronavirus.

Thank you in advance for your understanding, and for working with us to ensure that everyone in our community receives the safe and effective care they need.

If you would like a copy of this letter in a different format or language, please ask a member of staff.