



East Suffolk and  
North Essex  
NHS Foundation Trust

# We're with you all the way

Working together to help your recovery



## Let's get you home safely

Our number one priority is to support you in your safe recovery so you can return home as soon as you no longer need hospital care. It is important that, together, we plan for your discharge right away.



We will give you a likely date for you to leave hospital and agree your discharge plan with you and your representative. This will cover anything that you might need such as transport, equipment and any other areas of support and help.

We want to get you back home as soon as you no longer need hospital care. So that we can help you feel better, we and all those supporting you, need to know what matters to you. We recognise people will recover far better at home or in their community location. You may well feel anxious when you are back at home, but please be assured that we will do everything that we can to give you the support you need to help with your health and wellbeing.



# Why your hospital discharge is important

When you no longer need hospital care, it is better to continue your recovery at home or at another location in the community. This is because:



Nobody wants to stay in hospital any longer than is necessary.



Being in hospital with others who are unwell can sometimes expose you to infection.



Extremely poorly patients may not be able to access an urgent hospital bed if they are occupied by patients who no longer need them.



Meaningful and accurate assessments of your needs, as well as long-term decisions about your care, are better made when you are outside of the hospital.

**For patients who are over 80 years old, we know that being in hospital for any longer than necessary may delay their long-term recovery.**



## How you can help with your discharge

It is very important that you ask four questions every day when you see the team caring for you:

What is the matter with me?

What is happening with me today?

When am I going home?

What is needed to get me home?



It would also help if you could make sure you have outdoor clothes and shoes and your house keys available for when you do go home. We can arrange a packed lunch for you to take home (just ask) and we can provide a Statement of Fitness for Work (sick note) if you need one.

If there is anything else that we can help you with to ensure a speedy return home, please let a member of the care team know straight away.



## On your discharge day

We will always aim to get you home early on your day of discharge rather than keep you in hospital for longer than necessary. There may be a delay if you are using hospital transport, but we will make sure we keep you informed of when and where you will be picked up.



### Hospital transport

This is only available for people who meet very strict medical criteria, something your nurse will be happy to discuss with you.

Please remember that if you are not eligible for hospital transport, you will need to arrange your own transport home.

Your transport home should be early enough in the day so you can get settled back at home.

### Your medication

Medication you brought into hospital and still need will be returned to you before you leave.

If you started new medication during your stay, you will be given a supply to take home. Your GP will prescribe more if required.

We will explain your medication to you before you leave. Each new medicine will have an information leaflet telling you what it is used for and possible side effects.

# What you can expect as our patient

## 1 A named person to coordinate your discharge

You will be given the name of a person on the ward who will answer your questions and support you throughout your stay in hospital.

## 2 Right to high quality information and support

If you are discharged to your home with support, or to a community based location, the NHS and local authority will do all they can to help support you in your decision making and to keep you informed. This means:

- you will be involved in all decisions about your ongoing care and treatment and given clear information. While NHS care is free, certain types of social care are not. If needed, you will have access to a social care worker who can discuss what this may mean to you
- you will be informed about where you can access information including support services by your healthcare team.



### 3 Interim care arrangements

If you cannot be discharged to the place you were admitted from, we will arrange a short-term placement for you at one of our partner care locations, until you can return home. We also arrange short-term placements if your package of care is not available in time for you to return home. You will not be able to remain in a hospital bed as this will be needed for other unwell patients. This will also happen if:

- your preferred choice of care home is not currently available
- you have not yet made a decision regarding your long-term care
- you are waiting for assessments to be carried out or funding agreements to be made.

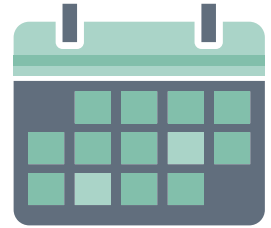
We will always try our best to place you at your preferred choice of continued care, but sometimes we are not able to do so and will need to offer you an alternative placement.



## After you are discharged...

### Follow-up appointments

If you need a follow-up appointment or any further investigations, we will arrange this before you leave, or will contact you as soon as we can when you get home.



When you are discharged, we will send a letter to your GP explaining the reason why you were in hospital. This will tell your GP everything they need to know about your stay in hospital, your medication and your discharge location.

### Help at home

If you need help at home when you are discharged, community support services will be arranged before or upon your return.





## Information for carers and family members

If a family member or a friend cares for you on a regular basis, they can access free support and advice from Suffolk Family Carers or Essex Carers First. Both organisations work directly with and for carers to provide personalised information and advice, making it easier for those caring for someone else to continue living their lives to the fullest.

### Suffolk Family Carers

Tel: 01473 835477

Email: [hello@suffolkfamilycarers.org](mailto:hello@suffolkfamilycarers.org)

### Essex Carers First

Tel: 0300 303 1555

Email: [hello@carersfirst.org.uk](mailto:hello@carersfirst.org.uk)

### Action for Family Carers

Tel: 0300 770 8090

### Care Coordination Centre

A contact centre for referral management

Tel: 0300 123 2425

If you would like a copy of this leaflet to be given to someone else, please speak to your nurse.



## Further assessments

It may be that you will continue to need further health and social care assessments once you are ready to leave the hospital. These assessments will be completed outside of the hospital setting and, wherever possible, within your own home.

If it is not possible to assess you in your own home, we will carry out the assessment in one of our community hospitals within Essex or Suffolk.

If you prefer, you can complete an online social care self-assessment or a carer's assessment by contacting:

### **Essex Adult Social Care**

Tel: 03456 030 7630

Email: [carers.team@essex.gov.uk](mailto:carers.team@essex.gov.uk)

### **Suffolk Adult Social Care**

Tel: 0808 800 4005 (Customer First)

Visit [suffolk.gov.uk](http://suffolk.gov.uk) and search for care and support for adults

## Infection control

To protect yourself and others, we ask that you clean your hands with soap and water, or with the hand gel provided, especially after using the bathroom and before any meals. Please encourage your visitors to clean their hands too.

And finally, if any friends or family are unwell, they should not visit you until they are fully recovered.



## If you have a concern

We hope you are happy with the way we have cared for you during your stay. If you have any concerns with the information, support and options you have been given and want to make a complaint during your inpatient stay, our ward staff will be able to advise you what to do.

## The NHS Friends and Family Test

We want to make sure you have the best possible experience of care with us, so it is extremely important that you let us know how well we are performing.

The NHS Friends and Family Test is an easy-to-understand feedback questionnaire that we ask you to complete either before you leave hospital or soon after discharge. Completing it helps us to make meaningful improvements to our services.

If you have any questions about The NHS Friends and Family Test please ask a member of staff.



With thanks to the Communications team at the Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust for allowing us to use their leaflet as our template.

Please ask if you need this leaflet in an alternative format.

Issued by:

**East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust**

[www.esneft.nhs.uk](http://www.esneft.nhs.uk)

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