

## Discharge Readiness

*Helping your doctor create a safe discharge plan for you*

*Reading this handout will help you be ready to leave the hospital when your doctor says you are ready for discharge.*

### At Your Clinic Visit Before Surgery

Please be ready to answer these questions at your clinic visit before surgery. This information will help your doctors create a safe discharge plan for you. It may also help prevent a delay or cancellation of your surgery.

### Follow-up Care

- Who is your primary care provider (PCP)?
- Do you have a pain specialist who manages your *chronic* (long-term) pain?

### Going Home

- For your safety, your doctor will make sure you meet these goals before you are discharged:
  - You can urinate (pee) and pass gas.
  - The pain medicine you take by mouth controls your pain during basic activities.
  - Any drains have been removed.
  - You are able to get around safely.
  - You do not have any signs of infection.
- When you are discharged, **you cannot drive yourself home**. A responsible adult can drive you, or you can take public transport.

If you take a bus, taxi, or other public transport, we suggest that an adult ride with you. For safety reasons, some patients may be required to have an adult ride with them.



*At your pre-surgery clinic visit, we will ask for the name of the person who will help you at home after discharge.*

How will you get home when you are discharged from the hospital?

- Personal vehicle (a responsible adult must drive you)
- Taxi or bus
- Uber or Lyft
- Hopelink or Cabulance
- Other (please explain)
- We advise you to have a responsible adult to help you at home after discharge. Your doctor will tell you how long this person will need to stay with you. They will help with preparing meals, grocery shopping, lifting items that weigh more than 10 pounds, household chores, pain control, wound care, and more.
  - Who will help you at home after discharge?
  - What is their relationship to you?
  - What is their phone number?
- Think about your home. If your home has more than 1 level, you may want to stay on only 1 floor for 2 to 3 days after discharge. This way, you can easily get to your bed and bathroom without needing to climb stairs.

### **Extra Help**

If you expect to need extra help at home after your surgery, please know that Medicare and private insurance will not pay for cooking or cleaning services, or for rides to medical appointments. These services will need to be provided by friends or family, or you will need to pay for them directly.

Based on their healthcare needs, some patients may need to go to a skilled nursing facility (SNF) after discharge. But living alone or having no care partner does not qualify you for placement at an SNF.

Please see the table on the next page for more information about these services:

- Skilled nursing facilities
- Agencies to hire a personal caregiver
- In-home healthcare services

## Care Resources After Surgery

<p><b>Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF)</b></p>	<p>Even if you have an SNF benefit through your insurance, it does not guarantee that you will be placed in an SNF, or that your insurance will pay for your stay there. Costs for an SNF in King County range from \$375 to \$550 a day.</p> <p>Before you can go to an SNF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your care team must decide <b>after surgery</b> that you need this extra level of care. Extra care includes complex wound care and physical or occupational therapy.</li> <li>• Your health insurance company must agree to pay for your care at an SNF.</li> <li>• An SNF must agree to the placement and payment rate.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Personal Care</b> <i>Cooking, cleaning, and transport or escort to appointments</i></p>	<p>Costs in King County range from \$25 to \$45 an hour. Local agencies include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Home Instead: 253.943.1603</li> <li>• Rescare Homecare: 866.737.2273</li> <li>• Visiting Angels: 206.439.2458</li> </ul> <p>You can find more personal caregiving services on the internet.</p>
<p><b>In-home Healthcare Services</b> <i>Skilled nursing services and therapies (physical, occupational, speech-language, respiratory)</i></p>	<p>To receive home healthcare:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your care team must decide <b>after surgery</b> that you need skilled in-home care. This means that you need more care than an outpatient clinic can provide.</li> <li>• Your health insurance company must agree to pay for in-home healthcare.</li> <li>• An in-home healthcare agency must agree to accept the referral. This means that they have confirmed payment and have service providers to care for you.</li> </ul> <p>Costs in King County range from \$60 to \$150 per hour. Local agencies include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assured: 253.838.7916</li> <li>• Evergreen: 425.899.3300</li> <li>• Providence: 425.525.6800</li> <li>• Signature: 877.670.3850</li> </ul> <p>Find more agencies online at <a href="http://www.medicare.gov">www.medicare.gov</a>. Click on “Find Care: Search all providers &amp; facilities.” Under “I want to find,” click on “home health services” to search for agencies by city or zip code.</p>

### Questions?

Talk with your doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns.

Neurosurgery Clinic and Spine Center:  
Weekdays from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., call 206.744.9340 and press 2.

After hours and on weekends and holidays, call 206.744.2500.

### To Learn More

Visit these websites to learn more about care after discharge:

- **UW Medicine Post-Acute Care Network**  
[www.uwmedicine.org/patient-resources/preparing-for-your-appointment-or-hospital-stay/post-acute-care](http://www.uwmedicine.org/patient-resources/preparing-for-your-appointment-or-hospital-stay/post-acute-care)
- **Lodging Options:** Lodging near UW Medical Center  
[www.uwmedicine.org/patient-resources/lodging-options](http://www.uwmedicine.org/patient-resources/lodging-options)