

Coming to Hospital – What happens?

Admission to hospital for both carers and the person for whom you care can often be quite daunting. This may be due to:

- Being in a new place
- Fear of the unknown
- Worried about what will happen to you and the person for whom you care
- Concern about what is expected of you, as a carer

Admission Types

Emergency Admission

When the person for whom you care is seriously sick or injured they may be immediately admitted into hospital through an Emergency Department.

Booked Admission

Occurs if your local doctor refers the person for whom you care to a specialist doctor and he/she thinks they might need to go to hospital.

If the specialist decides that they should be admitted to hospital, but their admission is not an emergency, they will be "booked" to come into hospital at a later date. This is known as a booked admission.

Informed consent must be given before a person can have a procedure.

The Hospital Process

Assessment

From day one of admission, a number of assessments will be conducted. From these assessments, an appropriate care plan will be identified and discussed with

the team, yourself and the person for whom you care.

Care Plan

As indicated, a care plan will be able to be implemented with inputs from each team member, including yourself and the person for whom you care. Some areas of care may include mobility, transfers, swallowing difficulties and bladder/bowel function.

As required meetings

As required (sometimes once a day), each team member involved in the care plan meets to discuss and evaluate how effective the care plan is in regards to rate of recovery and potential discharge planning.

Relative/carer conference

You can request a relative/carer conference at any time by contacting the Nurse Unit Manager (NUM). This allows feedback to be provided, and any questions and/or concerns to be answered. You can discuss with the NUM the ways you can be involved in providing care to the person for whom you care, while they are in hospital.

Home visit

In some cases, the Occupational Therapist (OT) will arrange a home visit. During this visit, the OT will be able to assess the home environment in relation to safety, access and any equipment/modification requirements.

Doctors' rounds

Doctors do ward rounds at least once a day. Feel free to ask questions about the person for whom you care, their treatment, or to raise any concerns you may have.

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How to find your way around the hospital

If you are the main carer and/or provide support for the person you are visiting you may feel a little lost 'within the system'.

Who can I ask for help?

Q: I have concerns about diagnosis, medical condition, medication or treatment plans?

A: Ask the ward clerk (at the front desk in the ward) to help you make an appointment with the treating doctor.

Q: I have family, social-emotional, and/or financial concerns?

A: Ask the ward clerk or nursing staff to assist you to contact the social worker.

Q: Where to from hospital? What happens next?

A: You will be provided with discharge information before you go home. In the event of a longer stay ask the social worker for a Relative/Carer interview. This is where you can ask a range of questions to a number of health staff regarding treatment plans for the future.

Q: How can I best support the person for whom I care while in hospital?

A: Ask the discharge planner about the best ways in which you can be involved in their care.

Q: What about parking?

A: Parking is available at all hospitals. There may be a cost at some sites.

Q: I worry about my safety when leaving the hospital after hours, what should I do?

A: Security is available at all sites.

Q: Where can I get tea/coffee and food?

A: Please ask staff.

Q: Where is the Pharmacy?

A: Please ask staff.

Q: Are there Banking Facilities?

A: Please ask staff.

Q: What does each health professional I might meet do?

A: Please ask staff for the factsheet **"Coming to Hospital – Who is the Treating Team?"** for further information.

Q: What types of services and support are available once discharged?

A: Please ask staff for the factsheet **"Walking with Carers - Contents"** for further information.

Q: How do I find support for my caring role?

A: Please ask staff for the factsheet **"Carer Health and Wellbeing - Contents"** for further information.

These factsheets can be found:

- [Carer Support Program - HNE LHD.](#)
- <http://www.patientinfo.org.au>