SHORT GUIDE

Leaving hospital: the short guide

Leaving hospital and recovery: the short answer from each of our 7 guides, with the address of the full guide.

This is a summary, not the whole story. Each full guide explains the conditions, exceptions and sources behind its short answer. They are online at the addresses below, and together in our full handbook, **www.dayandnightcare.co.uk/leaflets/brochure-leaving-hospital.pdf**.

Leaving hospital: what to expect and how to prepare

In England, hospitals start planning your discharge soon after you arrive, and most people go home with little or no new support. If you need help, short-term support is arranged so you can recover at home first and have any longer-term needs assessed there, an approach called Discharge to Assess. Families can help most by asking early about the date, the plan and who will pay.

Full guide: **www.dayandnightcare.co.uk/guides/leaving-hospital-what-to-expect/** · Guide last reviewed 30 October 2026

Discharge to Assess (D2A) explained for families

Discharge to Assess (D2A) means leaving hospital as soon as you no longer need hospital care, with short-term support at home or in a community bed, and having your longer-term needs assessed once you have had time to recover. Some D2A support is free for a limited time, but since 2022 the funding rules have been set locally, so always ask who is paying and until when.

Full guide: **www.dayandnightcare.co.uk/guides/discharge-to-assess-explained/**

Reablement and intermediate care: free help to recover

Reablement and intermediate care are short-term services that help you get back on your feet after a hospital stay, a fall or an illness. When arranged by the council or the NHS they are free for up to six weeks, whatever your savings, and the aim is to help you do things for yourself again rather than doing them for you.

Full guide: **www.dayandnightcare.co.uk/guides/reablement-and-intermediate-care/**

Questions to ask before hospital discharge: a checklist

Before someone leaves hospital, ask the ward and discharge team about the date, the plan and who will pay; check medicines, equipment and follow-up; and make sure the GP and any care provider know what is needed. Asking early, and writing the answers down, prevents most of the problems families meet in the first days at home.

Full guide: **www.dayandnightcare.co.uk/guides/questions-to-ask-before-hospital-discharge/**

Benefits during a hospital stay: the 28-day rules explained

Attendance Allowance, PIP and Disability Living Allowance carry on for the first 28 days of an NHS hospital stay and are then suspended until the person comes home. Separate stays 28 days or less apart are added together. Carer's Allowance usually stops when the cared-for person's disability benefit stops, while the State Pension is not affected. Telling DWP about both the admission and the discharge date avoids overpayments and gets payments restarted quickly.

Full guide: **www.dayandnightcare.co.uk/guides/benefits-during-a-hospital-stay/**

What to do if a hospital discharge feels unsafe

Patients and their unpaid carers have the right to be involved in discharge planning and to have concerns heard and recorded, but nobody has the right to stay in a hospital bed they no longer need. If a plan feels unsafe, say so early and in writing, explain exactly what could go wrong at home, and ask for the plan to be reviewed before the person leaves. If that does not work, escalate step by step: the nurse in charge, the discharge team, the consultant, then PALS and a formal complaint.

Full guide: **www.dayandnightcare.co.uk/guides/what-to-do-if-a-discharge-feels-unsafe/**

Care after surgery at home: hip, knee and other operations

Most people go home within a few days of a planned hip or knee replacement, and the first few weeks at home are when help matters most: getting in and out of bed, washing, dressing, meals and keeping up the exercises. Plan before the operation: ask about equipment and free reablement, decide who will help in the first weeks, especially at night, and arrange home care or live-in care if family cannot be there. Your own surgical team's instructions always take priority over general timelines.

Full guide: **www.dayandnightcare.co.uk/guides/care-after-surgery-at-home/**

Talk to our care team: 01865 715780

enquiries@dayandnightcare.co.uk · Out of hours: 07775 686272

Day and Nightcare Live In Limited, 9 Hollow Way, Cowley, Oxford OX4 2NA

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