



GOING HOME – WHAT NOW?

Before a person is discharged from hospital, it is a good idea to discuss their Stroke and treatment plan with the staff. It is important that you and the patient understand the type of Stroke they have had and any disability they may experience as a result of the Stroke. It is essential that people understand what therapies and what medical follow-up will and should occur after they are discharged.

Rehabilitation hospitals work in collaboration with the Stroke survivor and their carers to plan for discharge. This planning ensures that they leave the hospital's care as soon as they and their rehabilitation team feel they are ready. The options that will be considered and discussed depend on their improvement. The options at this point will include:

- Nursing home placement
- Hostel care
- Discharge to their own home with Community Service support
- Discharge to their own home with continued outpatient therapy
- Discharge to their own home

These discussions are not black and white and there is often a combination solution found depending on the requirements of the family involved.

It is vital at this point to:

- Have a **Family Conference** with the Doctor, Social Worker, Physiotherapist, Speech Pathologist and Occupational Therapist to decide what services and resources will be needed when the person gets home. If possible, speak to all the above at the same time.
- Talk to the **Doctor** about what is to happen when discharged from the hospital. Should they see their regular Doctor (GP) or specialist? How often should they see their Doctor? What progress should be expected?
- Be sure to understand **what medications** they are required to take each day and at what time. Make the staff write it down. Their local pharmacy may assist by providing details of their medications in a record booklet. Check with the specialist before any medications are changed.
- Find out if the hospital offers **outpatient services** for Physiotherapy, Speech Therapy or Occupational Therapy after they leave hospital.
- Ask for **simple exercises** you can continue to do at home.
- Include the whole family, so everyone is aware of what will happen when the Stroke-affected person gets home.
- Telephone the **Stroke Recovery Association** to get the **Free Information Kit** and/or the contact details for the nearest **Stroke Recovery Club**. The information Sheets may also be printed from our Website.

REMEMBER: Try to continue physical exercises and speech practice when the person returns home. The more you practice, the better you will become.

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