

Thinking About Your Discharge

You've been hospitalized for mental health symptoms, and you're getting ready to be discharged. That means it's time to think about discharge planning. Good discharge planning can help you get well and avoid having to return to the hospital.

This handout has questions to help you think about your discharge planning and the things you need to do immediately after your discharge.

Why These Questions

We talked to people who have been hospitalized for mental health symptoms in the past - a group of experts by experience. We asked them what they thought were the most important things to think about with discharge and staying out of the hospital. These questions reflect the things that they identified.

Your hospital care team may help you set up mental health care and related needs for after your discharge. These questions can help you build on the hospital's discharge planning efforts.

What You Can Do With These Questions

These questions are for you to answer, because you know you best! Not every question will be relevant to your situation. Some things will be important for you to take care of now, while you may decide that other things are still important but can wait for a few weeks. That's okay!

If you're a family member, friend, other supporter of someone getting ready to be discharged, you can share these questions with the person you're supporting and offer to help them with answering the questions or with getting support.

Where You Can Get Help

If you're still in the hospital, you can ask your hospital care team for help answering these questions, setting up appointments, and getting needed referrals. If you've already been discharged, you can ask your outpatient providers for help. You may also want to ask, family, friends, and other supporters for their help answering the questions or with getting support.

You can also reach out to the COMPASS Helpline for help finding resources. Learn more about COMPASS on the NAMI Massachusetts website: www.namimass.org/nami-mass-compass-helpline/.



This information is for educational purposes only.
Contact the COMPASS Helpline for additional resources
and information about this topic.

call COMPASS at **617-704-6264** or **1-800-370-9085**
email COMPASS at compass@namimass.org

mental health care and support

Questions to ask yourself:

Do I have appointments set up with my mental health providers after discharge?

Do I need to find new mental health providers? If yes, how can I find them? Who can help?

Would a structured program after I am discharged be helpful? If yes, who can help?

Do I have enough medication to last until my next appointment? If no, how can I get more?

Will I continue taking the medication prescribed to me while in the hospital? If no, how can I plan to taper off the medication safely?

Would peer support be helpful? If yes, where can I go for this?

physical health care and support

Questions to ask yourself:

Do I have any health conditions or issues that need to be addressed? If yes, how will I do this?

Do I have enough medication to last until my next appointment? If no, how can I get more?

Will I be able to manage all my personal care needs including bathing, dressing, using the bathroom, and taking medication? If not, how can I get help with this?

housing and food

Questions to ask yourself:

Do I have a safe and comfortable place to go back to? If yes, how will I get there from the hospital?

If not, where can I go for the short term? Who can help me look for long term housing?

Will I be able to manage all of my household care needs including cleaning, doing laundry, and cooking? If not, how can I get help with this?

Will I have access to food immediately after discharge? If not, how can I plan for this?

work

Questions to ask yourself:

Will I need to provide documentation when I return to work? If yes, how can I get this?

Will I need accommodations when I return to work? If yes, how can I get these in place?

Will I tell colleagues about my time in the hospital? If yes, what do I plan to say?

school

Questions to ask yourself:

Will I need to provide documentation when I return to school? If yes, how can I get this?

Will I need accommodations when I start or return to school? If yes, can I get these in place?

Will I tell classmates or teachers about my time in the hospital? If yes, what do I plan to say?

other areas

Questions to ask yourself:

Would connecting with a family member or friend after discharge be helpful? If yes, who can I reach out to?

Will I tell family or friends about my time in the hospital? If yes, what do I plan to say?

Do I have activities to fill my time after discharge? If not, how can I plan for this?

What things (internal or external) led up to my being in the hospital? Are they likely to happen again? If yes, how can I plan to deal with or avoid them?

Is there anything else I should be thinking about after my discharge?

additional resources for wellness planning

Some people find it helpful to use wellness planning or crisis planning tools. Some popular planning tools are listed below.

Wellness Recovery Action Plan

<https://mentalhealthrecovery.com/>

Madness & Oppression: Paths to Personal Transformation & Collective Liberation

<https://fireweedcollective.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/MadnessAndOppressionGuide.pdf>

Navigating Crisis

<https://fireweedcollective.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/IcarusNavigatingCrisisHandoutLarge05-09.pdf>

Psychiatric Advance Directives: Forms to Prepare

<http://www.bazelon.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/PAD-Template.pdf>