

---

# WHERE TO RECOVER AFTER A HOSPITAL STAY

---



## A CHECKLIST FOR FAMILIES CONSIDERING THEIR OPTIONS FOLLOWING A HOSPITALIZATION AND/OR SHORT-TERM REHABILITATION STAY

*If you answer “yes” to three or more of the questions in the checklist below, a short-term respite stay at an assisted living community may be the perfect next step for your loved one, bridging the gap between hospital/rehab center and home.*

### What to do after a hospital stay?

Your loved one is being discharged from the hospital after a serious health event or is not being admitted because they don't need the intensive medical care to justify a hospital stay or acute rehab setting. Are they ready to go home, or would a short-term stay at an assisted living provide the additional support and services to allow your loved one the time they need to fully recover?

- Does your loved one live alone? Are you, or other family members, able to be there to help or do you live far away, work or have other responsibilities?
- Does your loved one seem confident or strong enough to handle things alone or do you feel they are still recuperating and need to regain strength? Would you like the peace of mind knowing someone is there 24 hours a day in case they need assistance?
- Can your loved one shower without help? Are you worried about their safety in the tub or shower? Are you worried about stairs or falls?
- Is your loved one taking multiple or new medications that have just been prescribed? Could they use reminders and coordination with their physicians and pharmacy with medications and other post-hospital discharge instructions?



Do you think your loved one will cook proper nutritious meals?

Did your loved one start rehabilitation in the hospital (PT, OT speech therapy) and need to continue? Many people are not aware that rehab can be completed in assisted living, with services covered by Medicare.

Is your loved one exhibiting signs of confusion or memory loss? Sometimes a medical event can cause disorientation and confusion temporarily. For someone who already has memory loss, a hospitalization often increases confusion and anxiety, making it difficult to function independently and adhere to discharge plan recommendations.

### What to do following rehab in a skilled nursing facility or rehabilitation center?

Your loved one has completed their Medicare-covered rehab. They are being discharged to home, or you are being advised to extend your loved one's stay because they could use additional rehab and support before going home. Skilled nursing facilities or SNFs typically are for people who require 24-hour nursing services and skilled medical care; is assisted living the better alternative to an extended stay at the SNF?

- At the SNF, is your loved one able to get out of bed and walk to get exercise when they want to, or is movement restricted to their once or twice a day rehab sessions?
- Are the many hours between direct rehab services resulting in boredom, depression or a loss of motivation to fully participate in PT, OT or other therapies?
- Is your loved one isolated in their hospital/nursing home room throughout the day or is there a full schedule of social activities to participate in? If programs are available, does your loved one refuse to participate in "nursing home activities"?
- Is your loved one enjoying nutritious tasty meals in a communal dining room or eating alone in bed?
- Is your loved one allowed to shower and dress in their own clothes every day?
- Does your loved one complain about their surroundings as being too noisy, with bells ringing and overhead pages, or too clinical, with hospital beds and shared rooms, and they can't wait to have their independence and privacy back?
- Does your loved one have memory loss or confusion? A SNF may not have the ability to offer support for a senior with dementia; their cognitive baseline and emotional health can regress without appropriate social support, stimulation and structure.