



Planning for a Hospital or Respite admission

Checklist for carers

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Westbank Community Health and Care, Farm House Rise, Exminster, EX6 8AT
Reg. Charity 1119541. Company No. 6243811.





Fact sheet 122: Carer Check List

Why do I need a carer check list?

The purpose of the check list is simple - it is a document for you to record things you need to remember if the person you care for has to go into hospital or short term residential or respite care.

It's not expected to be detailed, just prompts that help you remember key things that will need to be done.

Creating a check list whilst your mind is clear and there are no other immediate pressures can be helpful.

If you are being admitted to hospital, then contact Devon Carers on 03456 434 435 once you have a discharge date and ask to be referred to our Hospital Service for support.



What does the person you care for already have in place?

Many people with complex health needs will already have a document that records key information about them which they take with them when they go into respite care, residential care or hospital. They all vary slightly, but some you may wish to consider are:

Hospital Passport originally designed for those with a learning disability but can be used by anyone

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/6cs/wp-content/uploads/sites/25/2015/03/healthcare-passport.pdf>

<https://www.rdehospital.nhs.uk/media/r5hnnkng/hospital-passport.pdf>

This is me, designed by the Alzheimer's Society for people with dementia

<https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/get-support/publications-factsheets/this-is-me>

Planning for your future care (end of life)

https://www.devon.gov.uk/providerengagementnetwork/tools_and_templates/advance-d-care-planning-template/

Yellow folder / My Care Wishes helps individuals living with a long term or life limiting illness to plan for the care pathway that they want in place.

Treatment Escalation Plan (TEP) and Resuscitation Decision Record, these documents are completed by the medical professionals.

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What's in the 'Hospital passport' or 'This is me'?

Having a single document that contains all the relevant information about the person you care for can make the transition to a new environment much less traumatic, particularly if the person you care for may have trouble communicating or remembering the information themselves. The following is a list of things you might want to include.

About me

Write down the name, address, date of birth, NHS number of the person you care for and their next of kin. If it's important to them, include preferred name, religion, etc.

Communication

Do they have any communication needs or preference? For example, is English not their first language? Do they struggle to hear or comprehend? Do they need an advocate to help them understand and make decisions, etc.

Can they read 'often small' writing and sign documents?

Do they have a speech and language plan?

Medication

If the person you care for has a repeat prescription script that contains all the information about what medication they take, then taking a copy of this can often be the simplest solution. Alternatively, create a list of what medication the person you care for takes, be specific about the doses and if it has to be taken at certain times, for example 2 x 300mg Aspirin every 6 hours.

Include any allergies, side effects or adverse reactions to drugs.

You should also list any over-the-counter medications, alternative remedies, nutritional or wellbeing supplements.

GP details

Provide details of the GPs name, surgery and contact details.

Diet/Fluids

Does the person you care for have any dietary need? Halal, vegan, diabetic, coeliac? Trouble with swallowing or choking? Likes/dislikes?

Does the person you care for need prompting to take fluids? What will they drink? If relevant, take the drink thickener usually used.

Personal Care

Do they need help with washing, dressing or to go to the toilet? Some people may be uncomfortable receiving this type of support from someone of the opposite gender, in which case the hospital will need to know.

Sleep

Does the person you care for have a particular sleep routine or pattern? Do they need a certain posture?

Mobility

Do they need any assistance or mobility aids to help walk or to transfer from sitting/lying/standing?

Disabilities or impairments

Does the person you care for have any disabilities or impairments? Do they have a mental health issue? Be open and honest, just because it doesn't impact on their day-to-day activity doesn't mean it won't be a problem if you're not there to help. As an example, being slightly hard of hearing may have little or no impact when they're at home but might have a major impact when they're in a noisy ward with unfamiliar people.

Is the person susceptible to pressure sores? Poor skin integrity? Likely to fall out of bed? Do they get anxious?

Does the person you care for have capacity to make decisions?

Continence

Does the person you care for require continence products? Hospitals and A&E departments generally do not have all variants of equipment in stock (all the different sizes of catheters, pads, bowel irrigation kits, etc) – so it's important these accompany the person.

Recent medical information

Include any conditions that the person you care for has, any allergies or medical issues. It may be obvious to you, but the current admission to hospital may be due to a completely unrelated issue.

Also, if the person you care for has had a recent admission it can be useful to include the details of this as well, such as hospital, ward, reason and dates.

Routines and habits

Routines can be extremely important to people and cause the person to be anxious if they can't follow their normal routines. In some cases this could be as simple as they always watch 'Countdown' each afternoon.

Carer details

Your details as the carer and how can they contact you. Do you hold a Lasting Power of Attorney (Health & Welfare)? If this hasn't already been registered on the hospital system you may have to prove that this document is in place if you need to make medical decision on their behalf.

Others involved in care and support

Who else is involved in supporting the person you care for, is there a paid care worker, community nurse, occupational therapist, etc?

Other items / sundries

Some people with dementia have taken their robotpet into hospital with them as it helps them stay calm. Others might need ear plugs in order to be able to sleep in a noisy environment.

If the person you care for uses paper tissues or moist towels to keep their hands or face clean, then remember to pack these.

Discharge planning

If a discharge planning or best interests meeting is needed, who does the person you care for need or want involved?

Once you have a discharge date, check the hospital is referring you across to the Devon Carers Hospital Service or alternatively you can refer yourself.

This is particularly relevant if their support needs have changed as a result of their admission or stay.

Some areas to think about

Has the hospital provided any guidance about what the person you care for should, or should not, bring with them?

'Go bag'

Many people will be familiar with the concept of having a bag packed and ready to go when someone they know is due to give birth.

The same idea applies if the person you care for is frequently being admitted to hospital. Having a bag that contains all the essentials, bedwear, underwear, clothes, slippers, dressing gown, washing kit, toothbrush, etc. can make the whole experience less stressful.

This is particularly important if the hospital is some distance from where you live.

Others living in the household

What arrangements are needed for any other people who live with the person you care for? Who is going to collect children from school?

Keeping the house secure

Does the water or central heating need to be turned off?

Do you need to secure windows or doors? Does the alarm need to be set, or the pendant alarm company notified?

If the cared for has a 24-hour care alarm at home – notify them the cared for is not in the property (i.e. in hospital) – otherwise if they are unable to contact the cared for, they will contact emergency services.

Jewellery, valuables

Make sure any jewellery and valuables are left securely at home, unless the person will need them at hospital.

Items of religious or spiritual importance

Many people will want items of religious or spiritual importance with them during this difficult time.

Pets

What arrangements are needed for any pets?

Getting to and from the hospital

Consider what arrangements you may need to put in place to help get you and the person you care for to and from the hospital. Will this be the same if the person you care for has to stay overnight or longer?

Often, the hospital will know of organisations that might be able to help.

Carers ID card and passport

Make sure you have your carers id card with you, as many organisations including the NHS recognise this as identification of an unpaid carer of an adult. It may also allow you to access other offers and discounts from third party organisations and shops.

Parking at acute hospitals

Most of the acute hospitals throughout Devon offer free or reduced parking fees for unpaid carers of adults, but this varies between hospitals. Please check with the hospital reception to see if a discount is available.

Keeping people up to date

Take a list of names and phone numbers of relatives, friends and professionals who you want or need to be kept up to date.

Contingency planning

If you haven't already you may wish to consider creating an:

- Emergency plan, in case you are unexpectedly unable to care
- Escalation plan, to record foreseeable changes and actions that will need to be taken

Calendar or Diary appointments

Cancel any appointments that the person you care for will be unable to attend.

Health and social care departments are extremely busy, and this informs them about the current situation and allows them to reallocate the appointments to someone else. For example, community nurse, occupational therapist, doctor, dentist, etc.

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Form 902: My carer check list

My name :

Items	Key Contact Number	Collected
'Go bag'		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Medication		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Information about the person I care for, 'Emergency Plan – Supplement', 'This is me', 'Hospital Passport', 'Yellow folder', etc.		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Mobility aids		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Glasses / Hearing aid		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Money / Card		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Mobile phone / Tablet + Charger		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Notify Care Agency		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Notify other support, Community nurse, Occupational therapist		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Notify DWP		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Pets		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>



