

## Helping you through a hospital stay: Easy read

### About this booklet



This easy read is to help you if you have to go into hospital.



It will talk about how you might feel about your stay in hospital.



It will also tell you some of the things you need to do.

## Going into hospital



You might need to go into hospital for an operation which has been planned in advance.



Or you might need to go into hospital because you suddenly get ill or have an accident.

## How will I feel?



You might feel frightened about going into hospital and worried about your health.



You might also feel worried about what will happen at home while you are in hospital.



Or you might feel pleased that you are getting treatment for your health problem.

### **What do I need to do before I go into hospital?**



If your stay in hospital is planned, you need to tell your family and anyone who helps you, like a social worker.



If you have a pet, you will need to ask someone to look after it while you are in hospital. If you don't know anyone to ask, you could ask your vet if they know anyone.



If you have a pension, this will still be paid while you are in hospital.



You should put valuable items somewhere safe while you are in hospital. You can ask a nurse or friend to look after your house or room key.



If you live on your own, you need to switch off plugs in your house or room before you go into hospital.



Take any food out of the fridge that will go bad but leave the fridge and freezer plugged in.



Ask a friend or neighbour to collect your post and water the plants while you are away.

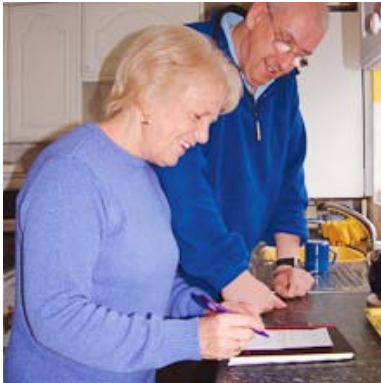


Remember to lock your house or room when you leave.

**This is a list of things you need to pack before you go into hospital:**



Any medicines you are taking



A list of any allergies or food needs that you have



Nightwear and slippers



Underwear



Toothbrush and toothpaste



Soap



Shampoo



Small hand towel



Hairbrush or comb



Shaver/razor



Glasses or contact lenses



Hearing aid



Any equipment that you need, like a grabber, walking frame or special beaker





Wet wipes



Money



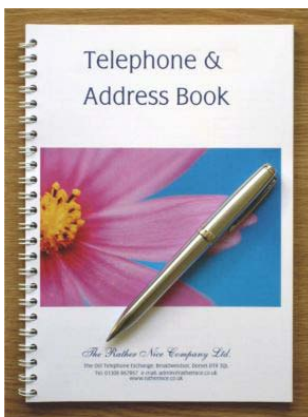
Keys for when you go home



Notepad and pen



Magazines or book



Address book



If you have to go into hospital in an emergency, don't worry. The nurses can bring you supplies until a friend or relative can bring your things in.



If your hospital stay is planned, you should get a letter before you go into hospital explaining what will happen.



Ask your doctor or a nurse if you don't understand anything.

### What happens in hospital?



You might feel ill or confused after your treatment.



You may also feel strange being around new people.



If you are worried or unhappy, talk to a friend, relative or nurse about how you feel.

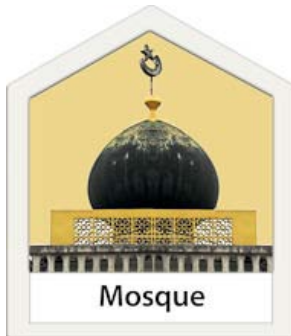


If English is not your first language, you can ask for an interpreter who will explain things in a way you can understand.

You can also ask for someone who can sign or explain things in Makaton.



A lot of hospitals have TV, phone and internet.



If you would like to be visited by someone from your church, mosque, synagogue or other religious place, you can ask for this.



If you do not have any relatives to visit you, you can ask for a volunteer to visit and chat to you.



You must eat and drink well to help you get better as quickly as possible.



If you need advice and information you can contact PALS. This stands for Patient Advice and Liaison Service. There will be a PALS office in the hospital.

### What happens when I leave hospital?



Planning to return home is called an assessment.



Hospital staff should plan your assessment and talk to you about what will happen when you leave hospital.



Sometimes it is not possible to return home and you might need to go into residential or nursing care.

This means living with other people where carers will support you.



This might happen for a short time until you can manage at home.



You might feel scared about leaving hospital.



Or you might be happy to be going home.



Try to get a relative or friend to make sure your home or room is ready for when you go back.



Make sure you understand what medicines you need to take when you go home.



You also need to understand how to use any new equipment, for example a panic button or walking frame.





Make sure you have all your things before you leave hospital.

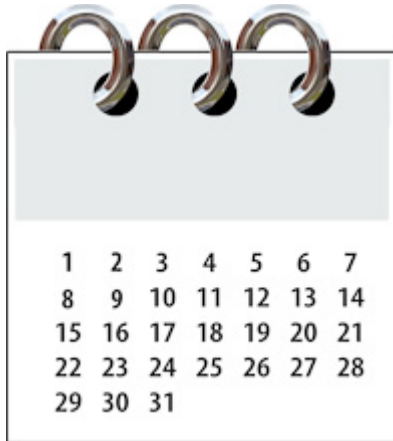


If you can't get home by yourself, hospital staff can arrange transport for you.

### **What happens back at home?**



Home might seem very quiet after being in hospital.



It can take time to get used to being back at home.



Keep the phone numbers of your doctor, nurse and social worker to hand in case you need to call them.



Try and rest and don't do too much in the first few days after you get home.



If you are getting tired easily and need help, don't be afraid to ask someone.



Try and do one job every day to help you to feel confident.

Remember things will get easier with practice.



If you are worried about fire, ask if your local fire service can do a free safety check at your house.

**How long will it take to get better?**



You might recover from your operation or health problem quickly.



Or it might take a long time.



You might feel tired or worried that you don't feel well.



Ask your doctor if you are worried.



Try and stay positive because things will probably get better in time.

**These things might help you to get better:**



Get some gentle exercise (ask your doctor first).



Try to see friends and relatives.



Think about what you want to do and ask for help to do these things.



If you find it hard to eat, ask someone to cut up food for you.



Or you could keep microwave dinners in the freezer, which are easy to cook.



A carer can help you with shopping and cleaning if you need them to.



You should have an appointment with the doctor to see how you are getting on.



Remember to talk to someone if you are worried or unhappy about anything.