

# The Role of Patients in Transitions of Care



## Play an Active Role

It is crucial that you play an active role in your own healthcare. During treatment, you may see more than one provider. You also may visit more than one care setting. In each case, **you** are the only factor that is the same at each visit. Through all of these visits, your healthcare team will design a care plan to help you. **You** are the person the care plan impacts the most. So, it is key that you and your caregivers are informed and take part in making the right choices about your care plan.

## KEY DEFINITIONS



**Transition of care:** when a patient moves between doctors or care settings, such as from a primary care provider (PCP) to a specialist.



**Coordination of care:** the process of patient needs, data, and choices being shared among all doctors and care settings.

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## Talk With Your Healthcare Team

You can help manage your health and your care plan by talking with your providers. Discuss your treatment options and let them know what **you** prefer. Keep your PCP informed about any changes in your health.

This guide includes a checklist on how to become an active partner in your healthcare. It will help you know what to talk about with your providers.

### YOUR PRIMARY CARE TEAM OF PROVIDERS INCLUDES



- Physicians
- Physician assistants
- Nurses
- Nurse practitioners

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## Your Healthcare Planning Checklist

Before you leave a doctor's office, the hospital, or another care center, be sure to review these points:

### YOUR CONDITION

- Ask your doctor to explain your health condition
- Ask what you can do to help get better
- Ask for your current health status in writing

### YOUR MEDICINE(S)

- Review what drugs, vitamins, or supplements you are taking
- Ask if you should stop taking any of them
- Ask your doctor to explain your medicine list and care plan
- Ask your doctor to write down how to take any prescribed medicine
- Ask your doctor to show you how to do tasks that involve special skills. This includes giving yourself a shot. Show that you can do these tasks

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## YOUR APPOINTMENTS

- Write down any follow-up appointments and tests you will need
- Ask your doctor to explain the reasons for and goals of any follow-up appointments
- Ask your doctor for contact information and time frames for any follow-up appointments

## YOUR SUPPORT OPTIONS

- Write down names and phone numbers of people to call if you need help or have questions
- Ask your doctor's office about any social work support services it offers. These can help you and your family deal with your illness
- Contact your health plan to learn more about its support services
- Write down information about other support groups and resources that offer help

## YOUR PAPERWORK

- Talk to your case manager or health plan about how much you will have to pay for your treatment. Find out what your insurance will cover
- If you are not at your PCP's office, ask to have your records sent there. Be sure your care plan, treatment records, and lab results are in your records
- Bring this checklist, any instructions, and your medicine list to all of your doctor's appointments

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## Your Hospital Discharge Checklist

Before you leave the hospital, you should talk with your doctor about the points listed in the Healthcare Planning Checklist and:

- Ask where you are going after you leave. Find out what will happen to you once you get there
- If you are going home, ask your doctor to tell your caregiver that you are coming home and what you will need
- If you are going home, schedule a follow-up appointment with your doctor. Be sure to arrange for a way to get to it



Good communication between you and your healthcare team helps to improve the quality of your medical care.

