

Going home from hospital using the rapid discharge process

A guide for relatives and carers

What is the rapid discharge process?

The rapid discharge process (hospital to home) is designed to support the wishes of patients in the last days/hours of life who wish to die at home. A person important to you has expressed this preference.

This guide aims to help you to understand the process. The nurse discharging the patient from the ward will discuss any concerns you may have.

How does this work to best support the needs of the patient?

The patient will be taken home by ambulance.

You may choose to travel with the patient. If you are not travelling with the patient, the ambulance service may ask that someone is able to meet them at the patient's discharge address.

Upon discharge, the patient's GP will be contacted to make them aware. The ward will also arrange for a district nurse to visit on the day of discharge.

The district nurse will ensure that:

- All prescribed medication is available (if a syringe driver is in use that arrangements are in place for additional syringes to be prescribed).

The district nurse will be your main point of contact. Their contact numbers along with other contact numbers you may need are shown on the back of this leaflet.

What happens if the patient's condition deteriorates on the journey home?

A person's condition at the end of life is very unpredictable and there is a risk of the patient dying during the journey home.

A decision has been made that if this happens, it would not be appropriate to try and revive the patient. A form signed by the ward doctor instructing this, will be given to the ambulance crew.

If you are not travelling with the patient, one of the ambulance crew will be with the patient at this time.

If the patient dies in the ambulance during transfer, the patient will be brought to the Hospital Emergency Department and a senior doctor will confirm death in the ambulance. The patient will then be transferred to the mortuary.

How does the rapid discharge process benefit the patient?

The aim of this process is for the patient to be cared for in their preferred place of care and to be comfortable and peaceful at the end of their life.

What should I do if I require urgent advice?

Please contact:

- a. Your GP or out of hours doctor
- b. Your district nurse

Useful telephone numbers

The nurse responsible for the patient's discharge will ensure that the telephone numbers you require are listed below.

Patient's own GP: _____

GP out of hours service:

Telephone 111

District Nurse

Derbyshire Patients

Tel: **01332 564900 (7-day service 8am-6.30pm)**

Out of Hours – Ring 111

East Staffordshire Patients

Tel: **0300 323 0930 (Monday to Fri 9am-5pm)**

Mob: **07966161780 (Within hours and out of hours)**

Nightingale Macmillan Unit advice line: Telephone 01332 786040