

# Helping you get better at home:

## Discharge to Assess

For residents of Somerset



## Why home is best for getting better

Hospital is the best place to be if you are very ill or need surgery, but studies suggest the best place to recover is at home. Staying in hospital too long can result in poorer health and longer recovery times, so as soon as you are well enough, we will discharge you to the best possible place to support your recovery – in most cases, this will be your home.

## Helping you get better at home

**Discharge to Assess** (which you may hear referred to as **D2A**) has been created to help people get home more quickly, offering a range of services including assessment (measuring your health and ability to perform everyday tasks) and rehabilitation (helping you get back to your normal life). This means you can get better in the comfort of your own home with the support of our team of professional therapists and reablement staff.



## What to expect

Before leaving hospital, your needs and discharge arrangements will be discussed with you, and your family if you would like them to be involved. Then our **Discharge to Assess** service will work with you in your own home to support your recovery and set important personal goals which will help you regain your independence.

This will involve a key worker, who could be an occupational therapist, physiotherapist, adult social care worker or a rehabilitation assistant (depending on your needs) who will work with you to **set your goals**, as well as experienced reablement staff who will help you to **meet these goals** when they visit. They will also find out if you need any practical support, such as help with your shopping, and can help you get in touch with a team of volunteers.

## What you can do

- Speak to staff about how **D2A** works and how it can support you
- Think about your goals for your recovery at home
- Include friends and relatives in the conversation – can they offer support to you once you are at home?
- Participate in the recommended therapy
- Let us know when you no longer need support

## Are there costs involved?

This service is free of charge. If you need further support, you may be asked to contribute financially – this would be discussed at your review.

## Who can I talk to and find out more?

You can talk to ward staff to find out more about **D2A** and what options are available to you – in fact, we will start talking to you about your arrangements for discharge as soon as possible.



## Jane's story:

Below is one patient's experience of how **D2A** has helped her with getting home and finding the confidence needed to live independently again.

Jane (name changed) lives in a bungalow in Somerset with her husband and son, and came into hospital after a fall. Although she already had problems with mobility, she was keen to go home as soon as possible, and was given the opportunity to get better at home with the Discharge to Assess service.

Her fall meant she would need some extra care and support to manage everyday tasks at home, so the Discharge to Assess team worked with Jane and her family to decide what things Jane could do on her own, and what things she would need extra help with. Jane's family agreed they could assist her with getting in and out of bed, and getting meals and drinks. Health and social care professionals arranged to help Jane with some of the things she found difficult on her own, such as going to the toilet, washing and getting dressed, and moving around the house. They gave Jane some exercises to help her regain her mobility, and the equipment helped her get around more comfortably while she got better. Each day she was able to practice carrying out tasks with the support of the Reablement team.

**Jane recovered much faster than expected, and within just a few days, her mobility returned and she was able to wash and dress herself and go to the toilet on her own. Just five days after coming home from hospital, Jane was successfully discharged from the service, and no longer needed any help from health and social care staff.**

## **Why you recover faster at home**

When you are really sick or injured, hospital is where you need to be, but for recovery there are many reasons why home is best.

### **Rest**

Quality sleep is essential for recovery but getting a good night's sleep in hospital can be difficult, with busy wards, people talking, lights and noises from equipment. Not getting enough sleep can slow down your recovery, so getting back home to your own bed as soon as possible is important.

## **Fitness, strength, and mobility**

Staying in bed for long periods can result in loss of mobility, fitness, and muscle strength; those aged over 80 can lose 10% of their muscle mass after just 10 days in a hospital bed, so it's important to keep moving as much as you can. Home is also a good place to work on your mobility – for example, practising climbing your own stairs or getting in and out of your own bed makes more sense than practising at hospital, where the sizes and floor surfaces are different to yours.

## **Improved mental and emotional wellbeing**

Being in a familiar environment with friends, family and loved ones is good for your mental and emotional wellbeing and feeling more settled and relaxed can help speed your recovery.

## **Less risk of infection**

Being unwell can affect your immune system, giving you reduced resistance to bacterial or fungal infections. Being at home reduces the risk of infection, as you will have fewer people around you than when in a busy hospital environment.

## But... if you can't go home

If you need more complex care, we will look at other ways to support you. This could include getting better somewhere else – such as in another bed in the community, where professional staff will support your recovery and rehabilitation.



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