



people with
disabilities
western
australia



WOMEN
WITH
DISABILITIES
AUSTRALIA
(WWDA)

Better Hospital Care for People with Disability



Going to Hospital

Sometimes you might be booked into hospital or you might go as an emergency. It is important that you prepare for your stay if you can. Make sure you go to the pre-admission appointment and ask lots of questions. If you use any special equipment (e.g. a hoist) make sure you tell the hospital staff so they can arrange one. If you need an interpreter, including AUSLAN interpreting, make sure the hospital book one for you. If you need somebody to stay in hospital with you make sure you talk to the staff.

Before going to hospital make sure you bring:

- any communication devices you use
- any mobility aids you use
- your Medicare and private insurance card
- a list or photos of all the medicines you are taking
- any other items you may need for your stay e.g. phone charger, toiletries
- money for extra things you might need.

Make sure you have cancelled any other appointments during your stay.

It is ok to need different things during your stay. The hospital should accommodate for your disability and make sure your stay is as safe as every other patient. If you are having problems, ask for the social worker or patient liaison officer.



You may be eligible for Patient Transport. Speak to patient liaison if you need assistance getting home from hospital.

Staying in Hospital

Your safety in hospital is important. Your nurse will make a plan with you about the best ways to keep safe.

Falls

Falls can happen easily when you are in hospital because you might be sick, taking new medicine, and in a strange place. Some things that help are:

- getting up slowly
- getting to know your way around the place
- asking for help if you feel scared or don't know how to get around
- being extra careful in the bathroom or wet areas.

Infections

Some tips for keeping infection away while you are in hospital and at home

- Wash your hands with soap and water or the hand gel:
 - before you eat
 - after you touch rubbish
 - after going to the toilet
 - after touching animals
 - before and after taking medicines.
- ask the staff to wash their hands before they touch you (you need to know their hands are clean)
- limit smoking

Pressure sores

Pressure sores or bed sores happen when you lay or sit in the same spot for a long time without moving. They start as red patches and soon become blisters and sores. They are a very serious health problem. Avoid pressure sores there are some things that will help:

- move around every 30 minutes
- if you are very sick in bed the nurses will help you move about every 2 hours
- drink lots of water and eat good food
- check your skin and ask the nurse to check places you can't see for redness or blisters
- use moisturiser on your skin.

Let the nurse know right away if you notice any:

- redness on your skin that won't go away
- blisters or broken skin
- pain in a fixed area like your heels or bottom
- tingly or numb feeling

Going home from Hospital.

Before you leave hospital ask your doctor or nurse about things you need at home, to make sure you keep healthy.

- Have you been given information about what to do now?
- Do you know what has happened for you in hospital?
- Are your medicines organised (do you have a script and tablets for the next week?)
- Have they sent both you and your doctor a discharge summary?
- Are there special things you need at home and have they been organised for you?
- Do you need help at home? Has it been organised?
- Are you able to get home on your own? You may be entitled to Patient Transport.
- Are your next appointments with the doctor or specialist booked?
- Do you know what to do if you get sick again?
- If you are worried about going home, ask to talk to Patient Liaison

The nurse or occupational therapist can organise a home assessment to help keep you safe.

Ask the hospital about your care needs for when you get home such as support staff, home medications or help with meals.



