



# MANAGING EMERGENCY ROOM VISITS: AFTER DISCHARGE FROM THE ER

## FACT SHEET

### After Discharge from the Emergency Room

*BQIS Fact Sheets provide a general overview on topics important to supporting an individual's health and safety and to improving their quality of life. This document provides general information on the topic and is not intended to replace team assessment, decision-making, or medical advice. This Fact Sheet is one of five regarding managing emergency room visits.*

### Intended Outcomes

The reader will understand what actions to take after the person is discharged from the emergency room (ER) to home.

### Definitions

**Baseline:** Usual state of alertness or consciousness.

### Facts

- Designated agency staff should be identified to inform members of the individual's support team, including the guardian/health care representative, of changes in the individual's status (condition), ER visits, and outcomes from emergency care.
- Failure to implement (apply) recommendations and monitor the individual's health status after visiting the emergency room can lead to more severe complications and health issues including death.

### Recommended Actions and Prevention Strategies

1. Discuss any new orders or recommendations with the individual, answer questions at a level appropriate for the individual's comprehension (understanding), and offer support, as necessary.
2. Ensure medications, food, and fluids are given, and hygiene care is provided on time, as is necessary and consistent with emergency room discharge instructions.
3. Notify the nurse/supervisor or other personnel, per agency policy, of the outcome of the emergency room visit. Discuss any new orders, recommendations, and upcoming appointments/procedures.
4. The identified designated agency staff should communicate outcome of the emergency room visit with the support team.
5. The support team should address any issues/barriers regarding recommendations.



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6. The designated agency staff should take prescriptions to the pharmacy or deliver, per agency policy. Be sure to have a copy of the prescription for the individual's medical record.
7. Ensure there is a method to follow up with and confirm needed medications or supplies are delivered in a timely manner, as well as what action is needed in the event they are not, including notifying the prescriber/health care provider.
8. Purchase supplies necessary to implement (apply) treatments/recommendations.
9. Transcribe (transfer) any medication orders to the Medication Administration Record (MAR), per agency policy, ensuring they are double checked by another staff person as soon as available.
10. Transcribe (transfer) all orders for monitoring and observation, treatments, and notifications to a treatment sheet so all staff are aware of the supports required for the individual's health issue. Ensure the transcription is double checked by another staff.
11. Ensure designated agency staff provides staff training for new treatments and/or medications, as necessary.
12. Mark any new appointments or scheduled procedures on the individual's daily calendar.
13. Ensure a designated agency staff completes necessary revisions (changes) to the Risk Plan or develops a new Risk Plan, including plans for following up on the individual's status (condition) until problem resolves or stabilizes (becomes constant) to give the individual's care. The individual's support team should be involved in full implementation of any new or revised Risk Plan.
14. Follow agency policy or physician orders for monitoring if sedated prior to or during ER visit. At a minimum, this should include ambulating (moving) with assistance
15. Do not offer of food or drink by mouth until the individual returns to baseline.
16. Document events that occurred before, during, and after the emergency room visit, per agency protocol, including any necessary incident reports.



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### Learning Assessment

The following questions can be used to verify a person's competency regarding the material contained in this Fact Sheet:

1. True or False: It is best practice to have someone double check all medication and treatment orders that are transcribed.
2. True or False: All new medications can wait to be started the next day.
3. True or False: If the individual comes home on the weekend, it is OK to wait until Monday to train everyone on new orders and treatments.



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### References

Hospital Discharge Planning: A Guide for Families and Caregivers. Family Caregiver Alliance: National Center on Caregiving. Retrieved 06/16/15 from <https://caregiver.org/hospital-discharge-planning-guide-families-and-caregivers>.

Recognizing Medical Emergencies. U. S. National Library of Medicine–MedlinePlus. Retrieved 06/15/15 from <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/001927.htm>.

Emergency Room Visits. Alzheimer’s Foundation of America. Retrieved 06/15/15 from <http://www.alzfdn.org/EducationandCare/ervisits.html>.

### Related Resources

Emergency Room Series Fact Sheets: *Preparing for and During the Emergency Room Visit* and *During Discharge from the Emergency Room*.

Emergency Room Series Checklists: *During the Emergency Room Discharge, After Discharge from the Emergency Room*

These resources can be located on the BQIS Fact Sheet & Reminders webpage at: <http://www.in.gov/fssa/ddrs/3948.htm>.

### Learning Assessment Answers

1. True
2. False
3. False