

rehab

What to Consider When Choosing... A Rehabilitation Facility

While most people hope to go directly home from the hospital, there are times when the recovery from surgery or illness is slower than expected or requires more care than can be provided at home.

Rehabilitation centers, also called skilled nursing facilities, provide care for people who are not yet able to care for themselves at home. Their primary goal is to get you safely back home.

Plan Ahead

- If your surgery is planned, discuss discharge planning with your doctor in the weeks beforehand. He or she can advise you about whether going directly home from the hospital will be good for you.
- If your stay in the hospital was not planned, discuss discharge planning with your health care provider as soon as possible during your time in the hospital. Most hospitals have specialized staff that coordinate discharge planning.
- Identify more than one rehabilitation facility in which you would be comfortable and make sure the hospital staff knows about your choices. If there is no bed available in the skilled facility of your first choice, the hospital will need to transfer you to another qualified facility.

Choose the Right Facility for You

If you can, visit a number of different rehabilitation facilities before your hospitalization and identify several that are appropriate for you. Talk to your doctor, friends and neighbors to find out which facilities have a good reputation in your community.

As you or your family tours a facility, you may want to consider:

- If the facility is close to family and friends and whether visitors will be welcome.
- How frequently the facility cares for people with your specific medical problem.
- If the facility has its own physicians to manage your medical care?
- If care conferences will be scheduled to review your progress and answer your questions and if your family is welcome to attend these meetings.
- If private rooms are available at no additional cost and if the facility is clean and appealing.
- Visiting the physical therapy gym and seeing if you can talk to a therapist; make sure the facility provides occupational and speech therapy in addition to physical therapy.
- How the staff will prepare you and your family or caregivers for your return home.
- Whether the facility accepts your insurance.

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