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University Health Board

# Inpatient information and advice Princess of Wales Hospital

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Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board understand this is a concerning times for patients, families and carers. We want to provide you with the very best care and help you to be as healthy as possible. To do that, it is important that you know what to expect and that we know what matters to you. This way, we can work with you to make sure you have a comfortable and safe stay and get home, or on to the next stage of your care, without any delays.

This booklet explains what to expect during your stay and how our services have changed. Your clinical team will provide specific information about your ward and your treatment. Our response to coronavirus continues to evolve as we learn more about the infection. Until there is a vaccine, we are likely to keep working differently to minimise further spread.

## **Talk to us**

If you need any help at any time, please do not hesitate to ask a member of staff and, if you can, please let us know what worked well and how we can do better. We value your feedback and it will help to improve our services.

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# Changes to how we run our hospital in response to the coronavirus pandemic

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## Changes to our services

Throughout the pandemic we have had to make changes to the way some of our services are organised. This has included:

- increasing intensive care capacity
- offering video or telephone consultations instead of face-to-face outpatient appointments
- bringing together some specialist services onto fewer sites so that they can be provided safely
- temporarily moving staff into different clinical and non-clinical roles.

These are temporary changes. However, we would want to make sure we keep any positive changes. For example, many patients have welcomed the opportunity for telephone or video consultations.

## Changes to admissions

You may be concerned about being in the same hospital as patients being treated for coronavirus, if you do not have the virus yourself. However, we would like to reassure you we are doing everything we can to separate patients with coronavirus and those who are being treated for other conditions. Our staff are also following the most up to date advice on infection control, as described in this booklet.

The safety of our patients and staff is our priority so all patients are tested for coronavirus when admitted to one of our hospitals, even if

you have no symptoms. The test may be done before you come to hospital, when you are admitted or during your stay. More information about the test is detailed in the *Stopping the spread of infection in hospital* section.

If you test positive for coronavirus, it does not mean that you will become unwell with the symptoms. We will monitor you closely to check if you develop symptoms during your stay. You may be moved to a different ward or clinical area and asked to wear a surgical mask to prevent the spread of coronavirus to other patients and staff. Some tests and procedures may be postponed if you test positive for coronavirus. Speak to your clinical team if you are concerned about this.

## **Changes on our wards**

We made changes to our wards to care for patients with coronavirus together in one place. Grouping patients who have coronavirus on wards together minimises the risk of spreading the infection. We aim to provide patients with same-sex accommodation. However, at very busy times, some of our wards have had to become mixed-sex, although we always try to keep individual bays as same-sex and ensure privacy at all times. The decision to change some wards to mixed-sex wards has been carefully considered – patient and staff safety remains our priority at all times.

## Before admission

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Please be assured that your surgeon, anaesthetist and healthcare team have your care and safety in mind. We have put in place some additional measures and ask that you work in partnership with us to reduce the risks to you, as well as other patients and health care team.

- You should have minimal contact with others for 14 days before the procedure and be strict about social distancing (keep 2 metres between yourself and others and wear a mask when outside the house) and follow good hand hygiene procedures before hospital admission. If you do not follow this guidance of minimising contact and maintaining good hygiene it may mean your surgery cannot proceed.
- Those who live with you or care for you should follow the same steps to reduce the risk to you.
- You may choose to self-isolate for 14 days before coming into hospital for your surgery. If you are in a very high risk group this may be a good idea. Your preoperative assessment team will tell you if this applies to you. If this is the case your family or those you live with may wish to do the same to reduce any risk to you.

### **To reduce your risk you could:**

- Have your shopping delivered and socially distance yourself from someone who is going out. If you care for someone, you may need to make alternative arrangements to ensure you are able to self-

isolate. Current guidelines on self-isolation are available on the Welsh Government website [www.gov.wales/coronavirus](http://www.gov.wales/coronavirus)

- Keep 2 metres (3 steps) away from people you live with and encourage them to sleep in a different bed where possible. If you can, use a separate bathroom and towels (showering and hand washing) from the rest of the household.

At your preoperative assessment we will be asking you a set of questions about any potential symptoms you, or those you are possibly living with, may have. It is important we know this as the risk of operating if you do have COVID-19 is very high.

If you, or a member of your household, develop symptoms COVID-19 between your preoperative assessment appointment and date for surgery, **you must** contact the preoperative assessment department.

### **How do we reduce the risk to you?**

72 hours before your admission for surgery, you will be asked to attend for a preoperative coronavirus screen. This will be done at one of our drive through testing units.

### **After testing we will ask you to self-isolate until you are admitted for your operation.**

If your test is positive, we would discuss the options with you but would recommend your surgery be postponed for a minimum of 14 days. This is for your safety and to reduce your risk.

# Stopping the spread of infection in hospital

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Patient and staff safety is our priority, especially during this pandemic. To stop the spread of the virus we are following advice, using personal protective equipment (PPE) in all patient contact, practising social distancing and have increased hand and surface hygiene practices.

## **Face masks**

Staff, patients and visitors must wear a face covering in all indoor public places around all health board premises, including all corridors, waiting areas, concourse, reception areas and shops at our hospital sites.

Visitors to the hospital should bring their own face covering but these can be provided if you don't have access to one and will be available at the entrance.

## **Clean your hands regularly**

To help reduce the spread of infection, including coronavirus, you should wash your hands with soap and water often – for at least 20 seconds. Where soap and water are not available, please use hand sanitiser gel.

Please wash your hands (or apply hand sanitiser gel):

- before eating – ask a member of staff if you need any help and a hand wipe will also be provided on your meal tray to make hand hygiene before eating easier
- thoroughly with soap and water after using the toilet
- before entering or leaving a ward.

Hand sanitiser gel dispensers are near the entrance to all wards. Please speak to a member of staff if the dispenser needs refilling.

Always avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.

## **It's ok to ask if staff have washed their hands**

Please ask staff if they have washed their hands if you ever have any concerns that they may not have done so. All staff have training on infection control and effective hand washing and we check this practice regularly.

## **Testing for coronavirus**

We are doing all we can to reduce the spread of coronavirus and we are carrying out coronavirus tests where required. Many patients with coronavirus will have symptoms, such as a new continuous cough or a high temperature, however people can have coronavirus but not have any symptoms (asymptomatic), or can be in the very early stages of coronavirus infection and will go on to develop symptoms later (pre- symptomatic). We know that patients with both asymptomatic and pre-symptomatic coronavirus infection can pass the virus onto others.

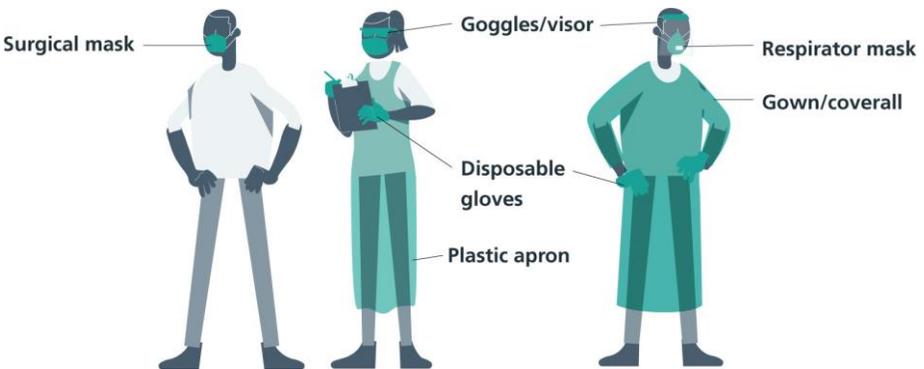
The test for coronavirus test is done using a swab. The swab is used to sample your throat and nose, this can feel uncomfortable but is not painful. The swab is sent to the laboratory and tested for coronavirus. The test will only show if you have coronavirus at the time the swab was taken and will not tell you if you have had coronavirus already.

## **Wearing a surgical mask**

While you are in our care, we may ask you to wear a surgical mask, for example while awaiting coronavirus test results, while on the ward, when moving between wards, when being taken home from hospital. We will provide you with these and you can ask anytime if you would like a fresh mask.

## Staff wearing masks, gloves and gowns

The graphic below provides examples of the protection your clinical team may wear during your care.



If a staff member is over two metres away from a patient but within a patient care area they will wear a surgical mask and may also wear eye protection. When performing direct patient care staff will wear a disposable apron, a surgical mask, disposable gloves and eye protection in most circumstances. When carrying out an aerosol generating procedures staff will wear a visor, FFP3 respirator mask, a long-sleeved gown and disposable gloves.

We are also providing additional uniforms and scrubs and laundry facilities for staff. This is to help minimise the spread of infection through contaminated clothes.

We know it can be harder to hear staff speaking when they are wearing masks and when you cannot see their facial expressions. Let staff know if you cannot hear or understand them clearly.

Please let us know if you are hard of hearing or lipread or have any other communication difficulties.

### **Social distancing – stay two metres apart where possible**

Please maintain a distance of two metres from others where you can to stop the spread of infection. This is not always possible in a hospital, for example, when you are receiving care, but we encourage everyone to do this whenever they can.

### **Hospital acquired infections**

There are many other infections that you can get while in hospital, many can be avoided with good hygiene practice. If you get an infection you may have to stay in hospital longer. Please follow any advice given to you by your clinical team to reduce the risk of getting an infection.

## Keeping in touch with your family

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Guidance for visiting may change at short notice depending on current circumstances. Currently, all visits are subject to the approval from the clinician/nurse in charge and arrangements may differ in different departments. Visiting will need to be pre-booked with wards in advance to ensure social distancing measures and restrictions are adhered to. Please check first or your visitor may be turned away. Visitors will need to adhere to social distancing (2 metres apart) as well as hand hygiene and infection control precautions on arriving and leaving the ward / department.

The wearing of a face mask is mandatory on all our sites. Those who are shielding are strongly discouraged from visiting. A medical mask must be worn if visiting is essential.

As far as possible visiting will be permitted outside the ward area, please contact the ward for more information.

Any visitors who are allowed must:

- wash or sanitise their hands as soon as they enter a ward or unit
- follow the additional measures that will be requested by our staff if visiting a patient with an infection.

It is very important that family or friends do not visit if feeling unwell, including any cold or flu symptoms, or be recovering from COVID-19 or been knowingly exposed to someone with COVID-19 in the past 14 days.

## **Virtual visiting**

We have free Wi-Fi on all our sites, so we're encouraging families and carers to speak to patients via smartphones and tablets. Apps like Skype, WhatsApp and FaceTime allow video communication, but Wi-Fi assisted phone calls and emails are also options.

## **Patient Advice and Liaison Service**

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) acts as a point of contact for all those wishing to get advice and information about services. They can be contacted via telephone 01656 754194.

## **Laundry**

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With current visiting and travel restrictions in place, family and friends of patients are asked not to visit our hospitals to drop off or pick up supplies for patients.

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) based at the Princess of Wales Hospital are on hand to help with a laundry swap service. The service will arrange to pick up and drop off laundry and essential items for your loved one. To find out more about the service please contact PALS at the Princess of Wales Hospital on 01656 754194.

Please be aware that in the coming weeks this service may need to be reassessed in line with infection control advice. We therefore ask families not to buy expensive items and only use the service for essential items, as items may not be able to be returned and may need to be disposed of.

# What you need to know about your care

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## **Our clinical teams**

Each ward has a manager who oversees the clinical teams working in the unit. Our staff work as part of 'multi-disciplinary teams' including nurses, midwives, doctors, surgeons, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech and language therapists, dietitians, healthcare assistants, pharmacists, radiographers, trainees, students and many others. You should expect your ward staff to introduce themselves.

The team will include:

- your named nurse — the nurse responsible for your care on a specific shift
- a ward manager — a sister or charge nurse or, sometimes, a matron
- healthcare assistants

## **Four important questions to know about your care**

There are four key questions that we need to make sure you always have the answers to:

- why am I in hospital?
- what's happening today? (for example, 'I'm having a scan' or 'I'm going to be reviewed by an occupational therapist')
- when am I leaving hospital?
- what needs to happen before I can leave hospital?

If you don't know the answer to any of these questions, please ask a doctor at the ward round or a nurse on your ward.

The care plan for each patient is reviewed daily by a multi-disciplinary team. They review your treatment and progress and make decisions about your care to help your recovery and get you home

## **A consultant or advanced nurse practitioner will lead your care**

You will be under the care of a consultant or advanced nurse practitioner and a team of doctors or surgeons.

Your care may also need input from specialist clinicians working in other teams, such as a doctor who specialises in pain control. The ward manager or the nurse or doctor looking after you can answer any questions you may have or direct you to the right person.

Speak to a member of staff if you are worried or if you have any specific needs. They are there to help you with your recovery and will support you in any way that they can.

# Getting better and staying well

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## **Eating and drinking**

Eating well and drinking enough will help you stay as well as possible and to feel better more quickly. This is particularly important if you have coronavirus as you may feel very tired and weak. Please tell the ward staff if you are ever hungry or thirsty.

## **Food choices**

Medications may change the taste of food or make you feel nauseated (sick) or you may find it difficult to swallow. If you don't have much of an appetite, try eating little and often and, if you miss a meal, we will order a replacement for you.

Our standard menu has a range of choices, including at least one vegetarian option. The nursing staff can also help answer any questions about the menu.

Your health condition or treatment may also affect what you can eat and drink. One of the multidisciplinary team members will explain to you what you can and can't eat/drink and why. One of our dietitians may also come to talk to you about your diet in hospital and when you are home.

## **Hydration**

We will ensure that you always have fresh drinking water at your bedside. If you run out of water, please ask the ward host or your nurse for more.

We will offer you hot drinks as well as cold drinks throughout the day. If you need more, please ask.

## **Help with eating and drinking**

We will give you notice that meal time service is beginning so that you can use the bathroom and prepare for your meal. We encourage all patients to wash their hands before eating. Staff will offer a disposable wipe if hand washing is not possible.

Let a member of staff know if you need help with going to the bathroom.

We can also help you with your meal, for example, by opening any packaging and supporting you to eat.

Let staff know if you need help with eating or drinking. You can ask for help with eating at any time.

Try to sit out of bed and in a chair for all your meals as this helps improve digestion and reduces the risk of food going down the wrong way. Please tell us if you need help getting out of bed.

Please let us know if you usually receive help from a carer at meal times, so we can help you with your meals.

## **Staying active**

Getting up and moving is important. It helps maintain muscle strength and fitness and for you to remain as independent as possible. It also helps with your breathing by allowing you to use more of your lung capacity. If you feel strong enough you should try to stand up and walk.

Speak to a member of staff if you need help and you should only attempt to stand up and walk if you are feeling strong enough. If you do not feel strong enough, try to do exercises in the chair or bed. If you have coronavirus and you would like more information on the chair or bed exercises, breathing exercises, or permission to walk around the ward, speak to a nurse.

## **How we can help**

We are here to help get you moving safely and doing the things you usually do. We will do this by:

- looking at what you were able to do before you came into hospital to make sure we understand how best to support and encourage you to keep moving. This includes assessing your risk of falling to ensure prevention plans are put in place
- completing a full assessment with you so that we know how you normally get about
- reviewing if there is anything that might stop you from being able to get out of bed providing you with walking aids where necessary

## **How you can get active**

There are some simple things that you can do to help you be as active as possible during your stay:

- if you feel able to, try to do the things you usually do at home, such as bathing
- if you need glasses or hearing aids, make sure you know where they are and if you don't, speak to your ward team

- if possible, do simple leg and ankle exercises – you can do these from your bed or chair
- if possible, sit out of bed for meals
- if possible, walk around the ward when safe to do so or to use the bathroom and toilet. Use your usual walking aids or let us know if you need help. If you have coronavirus, please check with your nurse that you are allowed to walk around the ward
- keep changing your position even if you are in a bed or chair

## **Getting a good night's sleep**

Sleep and rest supports healing and recovery. Being in hospital can make sleeping difficult because of different noises and interruptions disturbing you at night.

## **Reducing noise and light at night**

We will make sure we play our part at night by lowering the ward lights and limiting unwanted sounds such as telephones and monitor alarms, talking quietly and only disturbing you if really necessary.

To reduce noise on the ward during the night, we also ask you to:

- talk quietly and be mindful of others who are trying to sleep
- switch your mobile phone to silent
- make or receive any calls away from the bedside if possible, or speak quietly and keep the conversation as short as possible
- use headphones if listening to music or watching a film
- use the call bell if you need to speak to staff, for example, for help going to the toilet or to get something from your locker.

## Encouraging sleep

There are some simple things you can do to make sure you get a good night's sleep:

- avoid drinks that contain caffeine — caffeine is a stimulant so will be more likely to keep you awake; we have decaffeinated coffee, Horlicks® and hot chocolate are available; milky drinks also help with sleep and relaxation
- use the toilet before you settle down for the night
- make sure you are comfortable – ask for help if you need it or, if you're cold, ask for an extra blanket. Also, let us know if you are in pain so we can give you more effective pain relief
- we can give you an eye mask or ear plugs if you are having trouble sleeping, ask a member of staff if you would like them
- to relax before going to sleep consider the following relaxation activities
  - deep breathing exercises
  - listen to soothing music
  - reading for pleasure
- if you can't get your mind off your worries, make a list of these and identify how you can address them. For example, you can ask your doctor about a symptom or speak to a friend or family member. Tell yourself you will do this the following day.

Please talk to us if you have any worries or concerns that are keeping you awake. If you need more support, we can arrange it for you so please don't be afraid to ask.

## Looking after your emotional wellbeing

Serious illnesses can be distressing for patients and for their friends and relatives. The pandemic is creating additional stress and concern for many. Understanding the normal responses to a stressful experience can help make sense of what you are going through. This may be during the illness or in the days, weeks or even months after.

Some of the normal physical and emotional responses might include:

- feeling vulnerable, emotional or on edge
- intrusive thoughts or flashbacks
- disrupted sleep
- avoiding things you previously enjoyed
- loss of appetite or 'comfort eating'
- headaches or muscular tension

While we each manage things in our own way, there are some things that most people will find helpful:

- talk about what has happened – you are less likely to experience lasting effects if you can talk about what has happened
- spend time with people you trust – this will need to be via telephone or video while social distancing measures are in place but it is still important and possible
- be gentle with yourself – understand it could take time to recover
- take care of yourself – get enough sleep and eat well; avoid drugs and alcohol, they can numb feelings but may prevent you coming to terms with what has happened.

# Planning for leaving hospital

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## **When is it ok to leave hospital?**

When you no longer need acute or specialist care, your discharge plan will be put in place so you can go home. You may still need considerable rehabilitation or support to help with daily living but this will generally be better provided at home or possibly in a community hospital, nursing home or care home.

Once you are able to continue your recovery at home, a member of staff will explain what is going to happen next and provide you with supporting information.

## **Think about going home while you're in hospital**

Leaving hospital is a positive step but it is normal for you to take time to recover and get back to your normal routine. By thinking through your daily routine, you may be able to identify potential problems early, this will help us plan for the care you need at home. A smooth discharge is about making sure you have the support and help you need. Setting small goals in your daily routine, which can be as simple as making a drink or snack for yourself, can remind you that you are improving.

Here are some things to think about:

- do you have stairs in your home? If so, can you easily use them?
- will you be able to manage the journey from, for example, the bedroom to the toilet or from the kitchen to the living room?
- will you be able to get in and out of bed?

- will you be able to get in and out of the bath alone? If you have a shower, will it be safe for you to use?
- will you be able to dress yourself?
- will you be able to do the shopping or prepare meals?
- will you need help with your medication when at home?
- are you registered with a GP?
- do you care for someone you live with? If so, will you still be able to care for them? If you have concerns about this, please tell us as early as possible so we can discuss care arrangements
- when will you be able to go back to work? Talk to your hospital doctor about when you can return to work. If you need a medical certificate, the doctor looking after you will be able to arrange this for you.

## **Getting ready to leave hospital to go home**

Most patients can return home after their hospital stay without needing lots of additional support in place. Once you have an expected date for discharge, please make arrangements to travel home.

You may need help getting home. If you have a relative or friend who can collect you from hospital, you should arrange this with them ahead of your discharge date. Patients with certain conditions or needs will be able to use hospital transport – please ask your ward staff if you think you might qualify for this.

If possible, ask your family or friends to help make it easier to go back home by:

- bringing in clothes and shoes for you
- stocking your fridge and cupboards with essential items
- putting the heating on, if needed

- making sure you have your house keys
- making sure you have enough money for the first few days.

It is also important that, where possible, your family or friends are able to support you on the day you go home. Please try to keep two metres distance from others. We know this might not be possible in some situations.

### **Leaving hospital but you need extra support**

Please let the ward team know as soon as possible if you can see any problems with returning home and what extra support you think you might need.

Your clinical team might also feel that you need to have further care or support after your stay in one of our hospitals — with social care or community healthcare at home or care in a rehabilitation unit, nursing home or care home. You might also need to have special equipment or adaptations for your home to enable you to continue to live there safely.

### **What happens if I'm not well enough to return home?**

We will provide those patients who are moving into a care or nursing home after leaving hospital with information about the next stage of their care. We can support you to share this information with your relatives via email. Unfortunately, there is a possibility that patients will not have a choice of which home they will be discharged to at this time. If we can facilitate a choice, we will ensure this happens. You will be assessed in the care home by health and social care professionals with the aim for you to return home where this is possible.

## **Our discharge teams support patients who need support to leave hospital**

We have a discharge liaison team available five days a week to help patients with complex discharge planning needs. Your ward team can help you understand your options.

### **Support at home**

#### *Social care and community health support at home*

A social worker or care manager will generally carry out an assessment of your needs either in hospital or as soon as you are discharged from hospital. Ward staff or the discharge team will work with social services or local community health services to help put arrangements in place for when you leave hospital.

If you need support from district nurses, therapists or specialist diabetic teams at home you will need to be registered with a GP.

There are community services that allow you to leave hospital as soon as you are well enough and to have your discharge assessment carried out at home. We want to make sure that you only spend as much time in hospital as necessary.

A member of the community care team will assess you to make sure you have the right support to help you recover. They will talk to you and see if you have any additional needs and ensure you are fully supported in carrying out daily activities such as washing, dressing and preparing meals.

The kind of support you could be offered includes:

- equipment to help you at home

- regular visits from a home care worker, if required, to help build your confidence in doing things for yourself
- a goal and plan for your care and recovery.

How long you receive support depends on your needs. You will be reviewed a few days after you get home and, if you need on-going support, we will refer you to follow up services in the community.

### *Discharge to a community hospital*

Following assessment, you may be discharged from one of our hospitals to a community hospital. Community hospitals are focused on helping people who no longer need acute or specialist healthcare but who still need full-time care to continue their recovery or rehabilitation. This is sometimes called 'step down' care.

### *Discharge to a nursing home or care home*

If it appears that you may need on-going care and support after you leave hospital, we will talk to you about why this is the case as well as possible next steps. You will be offered an assessment by a social worker or care manager and other professionals involved in your care and offered different options. If the outcome of your assessment indicates that you will benefit from care and support in a care home, you will be given information advice and assistance to make suitable arrangements.

We will provide those patients who are moving into a nursing or care home after leaving hospital with information about the next stage of their care. We can support you to share this with your relatives electronically. Unfortunately, there is a possibility that patients will not have a choice of which home they will be discharged to at this

time. If we can facilitate a choice, we will ensure this happens. Staff are happy to answer any questions you have about this process.

All patients who are discharged to a nursing or care home will be tested for coronavirus before they are discharged. This includes patients returning to a care home where they previously lived. If a test result is positive for coronavirus or still awaited, you will need to self-isolate within the care home for at least 14 days. This means staying indoors and avoiding contact with other people. We will let you know if you need a test before leaving hospital. Testing will be done up to 48 hours before the planned discharge date to prevent unnecessary delays.

## **The process of leaving hospital – on the day and next steps**

We try to make sure as many hospital discharges as possible take place in the morning, before midday. This means you have the best part of the day to settle into whatever is the next step for you. It also means that we make best use of our inpatient beds by ensuring they are ready for new patients.

There are a few things we need to do to ensure your discharge goes smoothly on the day:

- make sure you have a copy of your on-going care plan, if you need one; if you are being discharged to a nursing home or care home, we will also give them a copy of the plan
- ensure you have all the equipment you need and know how to use it; if you need on-going supplies, you should know where to get them and who to contact if you need help

- give you any medication you need and make sure you know how and when to take it. You will receive at least two weeks supply of any new medication; your GP will be able to give you prescriptions for further supplies of medication
- give you a copy of your 'discharge summary' and send one to your GP electronically. Your discharge summary will describe the care you've had with us, the results of any tests and any medication you have been prescribed. It will also contain any information about isolation guidelines on leaving hospital if you have improving coronavirus symptoms or have tested positive for coronavirus as well as guidance for carers.

Please make sure you ask us for any medical certificates you may need, for example, so that you can have time off work to recover, before your day of discharge. You should also know who to contact once you get home if you have any urgent questions or concerns.

We look to get all of these actions sorted out early so that we don't delay your discharge. We also try to make other practical arrangements, such as transport, in good time too.

## **Discharge for patients with coronavirus**

Patients who are discharged with symptoms of coronavirus or have tested positive for coronavirus will be given information that is relevant to your current living situation, including self-isolation guidance. It is important that you read and follow this advice as you may still have live coronavirus in your body after your symptoms have cleared up and you are ready to go home. A

member of staff will go through this information with you to help you understand what you need to do when you leave hospital.

You may be asked to wear a surgical mask on your journey home from hospital. Your clinical team will inform you about any additional protection that you or anyone involved in your transfer home, including relatives, friends, ambulance staff or taxi drivers may need. This will support your recovery and protect others around you from risk of infection.

## **Emotional support**

After leaving hospital, you may find that you feel down or low at times or have upsetting memories or thoughts about your hospital stay. It is normal to have emotional concerns. Remind yourself of any coping strategies you have used during difficult times in the past. It can help to talk to someone you trust about these feelings. It might also be helpful to tell your GP or healthcare team about any difficulties you are experiencing.

# Recovery from COVID

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Recovery from the Covid-19 virus varies from person to person, and can take some time. Ongoing symptoms may last for several months and this can be perfectly normal. Symptoms can include:

- Muscle weakness and joint stiffness
- Extreme tiredness and lack of energy
- Loss of appetite and weight loss
- Sleep problems
- Problems with mental abilities, e.g. forgetting things and not being able to think clearly
- Changes to your mood
- Nightmares, flashbacks or post-traumatic stress disorder

If you are having problems with any of the above, this resource may be able to help you: <https://covidpatientsupport.lthtr.nhs.uk>

If you continue to have problems and would like to talk to someone, you can contact the Community Therapy Hub 7 days a week between 08:00 – 16:00 on **01443 471515**.

## Useful contacts

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Latest information and advice, including guidance about visiting, can be found on our website at:

<https://cwmtafmorgannwg.wales/>

### **Princess of Wales Hospital**

01656 752752

### **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALs)**

01656 754194

### **Concerns and Complaints**

01443 744915

Please use this page to write down any questions you may have