

Patient Discharge and Transportation Guidelines

Occasionally it becomes necessary to transport a patient from one healthcare facility to another.

Methods of transportation generally include specialized air medical transports or ambulance services specialized in non emergency transportation of non ambulatory patients.

For optimum patient care, it is important that the transition from one facility to another be as comfortable and safe as possible. Clear communications, including written and verbal instructions, between the releasing physician/ healthcare facility and the receiving physician/healthcare facility are essential.

A family caregiver, friend or patient advocate should accompany the patient to insure that discharge orders are received and followed.

A summary of discharge instructions should accompany the patient and should include the following:

- Allergy information,
- CT scan films and any other scan reports,
- Dietary and nutrition summary,
- Discharge orders,
- ID and location of all drains and tubes* ,
- IV rate,
- Laboratory test reports,
- Medication lists, including dosages administered at the time of discharge,
- Operative reports,
- Ostomy management, including date and time of most recent change, brand of appliance, etc.,
- Pathology reports,
- Therapy (physical, occupational) summaries,
- Special orders (wound care, etc.) and,
- Specialized documents, including insurance provider cards, Power of Attorney, DNR (if applicable), etc.

***Drain and Tube Identification** should include the labeling of all tubes (not "color coding" as color codes may vary from one hospital to another.)
Drains and tubes may include, among others:

- Central line,
- D tube (duodenal)
- G tube (gastric)
- J tube (jejunum)
- Tenchoff catheters

Instructions for drain and tube management should include the most recent date and time the drain or tube was changed, clamped or capped off.

These instructions may also be useful when a patient is discharged from the hospital directly to their personal home, as the patient's local physician will require all of the information listed above.

Thank you to the family and friends of Glenn Knight, for sponsoring Gabriella's research, printing and postage of this article, in his memory.

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Resources and Referrals for Patients with Pseudomyxoma Peritonei and Rare Intestinal Cancers
c/o Gabriella Graham = Post Office Box 6484 = Salinas, CA = 93912
Phone: 831. 424.4545 = Email: pmppals@yahoo.com = Website: www.pmppals.org

