

Caregiver's Corner



Post-Hospitalization Options in a Skilled Nursing Facility

Does It Feel “Too Soon”?

You're not alone if it feels like your loved one returned home too soon after hospitalization. Understandably, many people feel tired and find that they just aren't up to par. Often times, a few days will pass, and with plenty of rest and the help of family and friends, many of them are able to get back on their feet again.

But some people have real trouble. What if things really aren't going well, and you know in your heart that something more is needed for your loved one to get better? Perhaps you have no one to help you with caregiving, or you must return to a full-time job. Has your loved one lost strength to do the activities of daily living? Maybe it's time to consider an alternative... maybe it's time to consider short-term skilled nursing care.

Skilled nursing facilities have changed drastically over the last decade. Many facilities have risen to the challenges of the changing times, and are no longer viewed as “a place to die”, but serve as rehabilitation and recovery centers. The nursing facilities of today meet the needs of post-surgical and other post-acute patients who need the short-term services of licensed medical professionals. These medical professionals include doctors, registered nurses, and physical, occupational



and speech therapists who are trained to help people regain their independence and return home.

In some cases, this kind of expertise may be available at little or no cost through the Medicare or Medicaid programs. With both programs, certain pre-admission criteria must be met. If your loved one was discharged from the hospital within the last 30 days, they may be eligible for Medicare coverage in a skilled nursing facility. The Medicaid program has certain financial criteria that must be met.



Would You Qualify for a Medicare Stay?

To qualify, you must:

- ✓ Have Medicare entitlement & eligibility
- ✓ Have been hospitalized for three consecutive midnights as an in-patient
- ✓ Have been discharged from the hospital within the last 30 days
- ✓ Have a pre-admission screening

If you qualify, Medicare pays:

- ✓ Up to 100 days for qualifying patients
- ✓ All costs for the first 20 days
- ✓ All but a daily co-payment on days 21 - 100



Additionally, many nursing facilities offer respite care or short-term stays when Medicare won't pay. Respite stays can range anywhere from a few days to a month or more. Benefits of respite stays include 24-hour nursing supervision, assistance with dressing, laundry services, and nutritious meals and snacks. In some cases, therapy may even be available.

What's more, skilled nursing facilities provide the opportunity for socialization through their activity department. Social service professionals are also on staff to help with discharge planning, and can work with various agencies in the community to help find the services needed when your loved one is *really* ready to return home.

If you would like more information, please contact Doctors Nursing & Rehabilitation Center for more information at (618) 548-4884. By working with the physician we can help provide the level of care your loved one needs.