

Medicare Condition of Participation for Discharge Planning

The hospital must have in effect a discharge planning process that applies to all patients. The hospital's policies and procedures must be specified in writing.

- (a) *Standard: Identification of patients in need of discharge planning.* The hospital must identify at an early stage of hospitalization all patients who are likely to suffer adverse health consequences upon discharge if there is no adequate discharge planning.
- (b) *Standard: Discharge planning evaluation.*
 - (1) The hospital must provide a discharge planning evaluation to the patients identified in paragraph (a) of this section, and to other patients upon the patient's request, the request of a person acting on the patient's behalf, or the request of the physician.
 - (2) A registered nurse, social worker, or other appropriately qualified personnel must develop, or supervise the development of, the evaluation.
 - (3) The discharge planning evaluation must include an evaluation of the likelihood of a patient needing post-hospital services and of the availability of the services.
 - (4) The discharge planning evaluation must include an evaluation of the likelihood of a patient's capacity for self-care or of the possibility of the patient being cared for in the environment from which he or she entered the hospital.
 - (5) The hospital personnel must complete the evaluation on a timely basis so that appropriate arrangements for post-hospital care are made before discharge, and to avoid unnecessary delays in discharge.
 - (6) The hospital must include the discharge planning evaluation in the patient's medical record for use in establishing an appropriate discharge plan and must discuss the results of the evaluation with the patient or individual acting on his or her behalf.
- (c) *Standard: Discharge plan.*
 - (1) A registered nurse, social worker, or other appropriately qualified personnel must develop, or supervise the development of, a discharge plan if the discharge planning evaluation indicates a need for a discharge plan.
 - (2) In the absence of a finding by the hospital that a patient needs a discharge plan, the patient's physician may request a discharge plan. In such a case, the hospital must develop a discharge plan for the patient.
 - (3) The hospital must arrange for the initial implementation of the patient's discharge plan.
 - (4) The hospital must reassess the patient's discharge plan if there are factors that may affect continuing care needs or the appropriateness of the discharge plan.
 - (5) As needed, the patient and family members or interested persons must be counseled to prepare them for post-hospital care.

- (6) The hospital must include in the discharge plan a list of HHAs or SNFs that are available to the patient, that are participating in the Medicare program, and that serve the geographic area (as defined by the HHA) in which the patient resides, or in the case of a SNF, in the geographic area requested by the patient. HHAs must request to be listed by the hospital as available.
 - (i) This list must only be presented to patients for whom home health care or post-hospital extended care services are indicated and appropriate as determined by the discharge planning evaluation.
 - (ii) For patients enrolled in managed care organizations, the hospital must indicate the availability of home health and posthospital extended care services through individuals and entities that have a contract with the managed care organizations.
 - (iii) The hospital must document in the patient's medical record that the list was presented to the patient or to the individual acting on the patient's behalf.
 - (7) The hospital, as part of the discharge planning process, must inform the patient or the patient's family of their freedom to choose among participating Medicare providers of posthospital care services and must, when possible, respect patient and family preferences when they are expressed. The hospital must not specify or otherwise limit the qualified providers that are available to the patient.
 - (8) The discharge plan must identify any HHA or SNF to which the patient is referred in which the hospital has a disclosable financial interest, as specified by the Secretary, and any HHA or SNF that has a disclosable financial interest in a hospital under Medicare. Financial interests that are disclosable under Medicare are determined in accordance with the provisions of part 420, subpart C, of this chapter.
- (d) *Standard: Transfer or referral.* The hospital must transfer or refer patients, along with necessary medical information, to appropriate facilities, agencies, or outpatient services, as needed, for follow-up or ancillary care.
- (e) *Standard: Reassessment.* The hospital must reassess its discharge planning process on an on-going basis. The reassessment must include a review of discharge plans to ensure that they are responsive to discharge needs.

[Title 42, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 482.43]