

SUPPORTING PATIENTS WITH DISABILITY, FAMILIES AND DECISION MAKERS WHO ARE LEAVING HOSPITAL DURING COVID-19

QDN has been engaged by Queensland Health to provide independent information, support, advocacy and guidance to patients with disability and their families, carers and decision makers to enable them to consider options for leaving hospital to live in community.

Queenslanders with Disability Network (QDN) is an independent organisation, run by people with disability, for people with disability. Our organisation undertakes advocacy work to assist people with disability to have a voice around the things that matter to them and to get outcomes that improve their lives and be fully included in our Queensland community. Over the past 7 years QDN has worked alongside Queenslanders with disability, helping people with information and support with the National Disability Insurance Scheme.



LEAVING HOSPITAL – DISCHARGE DURING COVID-19

Why do I need to leave hospital?

You will have received information from the hospital that your health care team (doctors, nurses and allied health) agree that it is medically safe for you to leave hospital, to live and receive care and support in the community. You will have also received information that hospitals are currently preparing to make room to care for patients effected by the novel coronavirus (COVID-19), and it is important for

people who are well to be where they are less likely to be exposed to the virus.

What can I expect when I am being discharged from hospital?

In the hospital discharge process, there will be a number of different agencies and services involved and it will be important to understand their roles in assisting you, and what you can expect from them.

Services supporting your discharge from hospital

Hospital and health service

HHSs are coordinating patient discharge and transition. This includes:

- Communicating with you, your family, guardians and decision makers about what is happening, why this is happening, and linking you with agencies like the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) about your options to consider regarding accommodation and support in the COVID-19 environment;
- Making sure that the hospital are communicating with you, your family, guardians and decision makers, the National Disability Insurance Agency and other disability and housing providers who will be supporting you in the community;
- Ensuring that all assessments and evidence has been collected to support your discharge. This may include referring you to a team at the Department of Communities, Disability Service and Seniors who can help you with this;

- Working with you to make sure you have the equipment you need and that you can be transported safely to your new accommodation;
- If you need Positive Behaviour Support, the hospital will share the relevant information with your support provider;
- Working with you to give information about your health and disability support needs to your housing and disability providers in the community;
- **If you are not eligible for the NDIS:** The hospital will arrange alternate safe accommodation and supports.

National Disability Insurance Agency

If you are eligible for the NDIS, the NDIA will work with you to ensure that you have the disability-related supports you need to live in the community. This might include supporting you to get the assessments you require, having an NDIS plan that meets your needs, communicating with your support providers and exploring your disability housing options or home modifications. The NDIA will also make sure long-term housing options are explored if you are moved to a short-term arrangement.



HOW CAN QDN SUPPORT ME?

You can contact QDN if you want to access independent support, guidance and advocacy during this time. QDN is an independent organisation, separate from Queensland Health, the Hospital and Health Services and the NDIA. QDN is available to:

- Provide independent information, and support. We can talk through with you the hospital discharge process, and help you have the information you need to assist you with making decisions about what is right for your needs and life;
- Work with you to explore your options, choice and control in relation to the range of accommodation and support options available to you in the COVID-19 environment;
- Help you to get the information you need to be prepared and equipped for your move from hospital;
- Support communication and work with the different agencies involved in arranging your supports to ensure you are included in the planning and have housing and support arrangements that meet your needs.

We are available to talk to you by phone and video conference. We can offer other supports to help you transition to community, including linking you with another person with disability who has had similar lived experience if you wanted to talk to them about what is happening and any issues or concerns.

During COVID-19, the priority of our health systems and Governments is to work to make sure people are safe. It is important during this time, that people with disability can get the information they need, be supported in the transition and journey and be connected to supports and people.

CONTACT QDN NOW

Telephone 1300 363 783 or 3252 8566

Monday to Friday 9:00am – 5:00pm

Email address: qdn@qdn.org.au

Queenslanders with Disability

Network: <https://qdn.org.au>