

# WHAT IS A CARE PARTNER?



FOR PATIENTS:

**Why do I need one?**

---

FOR CARE PARTNERS:

**What do I do now?**

# FOR THE PATIENT

## Why do I need a care partner?

Taking care of yourself alone can be difficult, especially when you are sick and in the hospital. Having someone who knows you well and is willing to be another set of eyes and ears can help you get the care you want and need in the hospital and have a smooth transition to successful recovery at home.

## What is a care partner?

A care partner is someone you choose to help you during and after your hospital stay. Your care partner also will help the healthcare team better understand your needs and preferences and may participate in your medical care. Your care partner should be prepared to be involved in your care for the entire hospital stay and help with your needs at home.

Your care partner will be informed of your health progress. They should be ready to participate in rounds and discussions with the medical team and other staff.

Both the person you select and the hospital staff should know that they are your care partner. Once the hospital staff know who you have selected, they will ensure that your care partner is aware of any changes in the treatment plan and include your care partner in conversations with you regarding your care.

Having a care partner does not mean that you no longer get to choose what you want! The care partner helps support you and your choices and expresses them to the medical team.

## Who can be a care partner?

Care partners can be family members, friends, neighbors or paid assistants. Whoever you choose, you should be comfortable discussing your healthcare with that person and working with them to ensure you receive care that you want.

The care partner should be available to support you both during and after the hospital stay.



# FOR THE CARE PARTNER

## What can I do as a care partner?

### During the hospital stay

You can help staff understand the patient's care preferences and goals. This information is critical to helping staff understand what is important to the patient in their everyday life. To do this, you may want to participate in shift reports or daily rounds to share their care preferences and goals, shape the plan of care and inform the team of any issues they should take into consideration.

#### During the rounds, please feel free to:

- take notes;
- ask questions; and
- let the team know of anything that is concerning or confusing to you or the patient.

If you are not able to attend the rounds, please tell the staff how to reach you to tell you the care plan and give you an opportunity to ask questions, e.g., the team could connect with you via phone or text, on the patient's whiteboard or you could set up a time to speak to them in person.

### During the hospital stay and after

As the care partner, you can help the patient by reinforcing instructions that were provided regarding the patient's care, looking for specific signs and symptoms related to the patient's disease/diagnosis that should be reported to the medical team, preparing the patient for discharge and, most importantly, preparing for a smooth transition to managing the patient's care at home. The medical team will tell you what to look for and who to talk to if you have concerns, including after the patient goes home.

### After discharge

The hospital team may ask you to assist with certain care or coordination tasks for the patient. If any help is needed, the hospital staff will teach you and the patient how to do the task and ensure that you're both fully comfortable with everything before leaving the hospital.

#### Depending on the patient's needs, tasks may include:

- making and getting to appointments for follow-up care;
- remembering how and when to take medication;
- performing simple wound care and dressing changes;
- understanding dietary considerations to stay well post discharge;
- troubleshooting events, problems or setbacks; or
- coordinating needed services like a visiting nurse, medical equipment or other help.

The above are examples only. You may be asked to assist with none or all of the above. Please say something to staff if you have any questions!



As a care partner, you play an important role in helping the healthcare team provide care tailored to the patient's preferences and goals. You help ensure that the patient's values guide clinical decisions and coordinate and help navigate the post-hospital care management plan.

---

## Thank you for being a **CARE PARTNER!**

If you have any questions about the patient's care or being a care partner, please contact:

**[CONTACT PERSON ON THE TEAM]**

---

On this unit, you are invited to \_\_\_\_\_, which typically occurs at:  
\_\_\_\_\_.

If you are unable to attend at this time, ask a nurse if you can participate by telephone or schedule another time when you can be present.