

The Medical Maze: Making Sense of it All

Social Work, how we can help you.



**Social Workers don't have all
the answers- but they usually
know where to find them.**



Role of a Social Worker in a skilled nursing facility.

- Social Worker
- Patient Advocate
- Discharge Planner
- Case Manager
- Care Coordination
- Social Services
- Social Service Designee
- “Guide or navigator”

“A social worker in a skilled nursing facility is a licensed professional who provides psychosocial, emotional, and advocacy support to residents, families, and the care team. Their work is central to ensuring residents receive comprehensive, person-centered care that addresses not only medical needs but also emotional, social, and spiritual well being. “

-NASW



What does that mean?!

- Assessments and care planning
- Advocacy
- Support or Education
- Transition support or Discharge planning
- Resource connections
- Quality of Life Enhancement

Benefit of a Social Worker

What to expect when you or your loved one is admitted to a skilled nursing facility (SNF).



What to expect...

- Your first couple of days will be busy with assessments from all disciplines.
- You will answer a lot of questions about how you were doing prior to your hospitalization. Your social worker will visit you during this time to “get to know you”, review your benefits, and ask you about your goals.
- Be prepared to discuss discharge planning from day one.
 - Discharge planning begins on admission. An ongoing collaboration between hospital, SNF, and patient/family.
- Therapies will complete an assessment/evaluation.
- The “team” will have a care plan meeting to review those evaluations and formulate a plan of care and an anticipated discharge date.
- Your social worker will follow up with you and your family to review the plan.
- Recommendations for aftercare will be discussed. Your rehabilitation journey will not end at discharge.

What to expect continued...

- Your social worker will work with you and your family on a safe discharge plan.
- Family meetings can be held at any time and beneficial for open communication and planning.
- Durable medical equipment (DME) for home will be discussed, and you will have assistance in attaining those items. *Most DME is not covered, and your social worker will assist you in navigating this process.
- Transportation
- Family Training
- Referrals to aftercare providers
- Community Resources: what they are and where to find them.

What you can do to be prepared.

- Know your benefits: Do you have traditional Medicare, a supplemental plan, Medicare Advantage, or a commercial insurance plan.
 - Medicare.gov
 - Medicare Advantage customer service
 - Commercial insurance customer service
- Long term care insurance
 - Review your policy, how do make a claim, what services will it cover, what is the elimination period.
- Transportation
 - How will you get home, or to follow up appointments
- Follow up appointments
 - Who will go with you to your appointments if you need assistance?
 - Second set of “ears”.
- Meals, laundry and home/yard maintenance
 - Loved ones and friends want to help because you matter.

What you can do to be prepared.

- Make sure to have copies of all your insurance cards and advanced directives.
- Have conversations with your family regarding your wishes. If you don't have advanced directives in place your social worker can assist.
 - Talk with your loved ones before a crisis so you can communicate your wishes.
 - There are resources available to assist in those conversations and advanced directive planning.
- Plan B- if you would need more help at home what would that look like, where would you go, who would be able to assist you?
- Who do you want to be your primary contact. Family involvement is encouraged, but having a person identified as your personal representative or your main contact is ideal. You will always be asked if you want family updated and it is your right to decline.
 - Your main contact should be someone that is willing to “cascade” information or updates out to your support system.

**“Compassion is the first step.
Empowerment is the goal.”**

**“Hope grows where someone
takes the time to listen”**

-Unknown



Thoughts or Questions?

