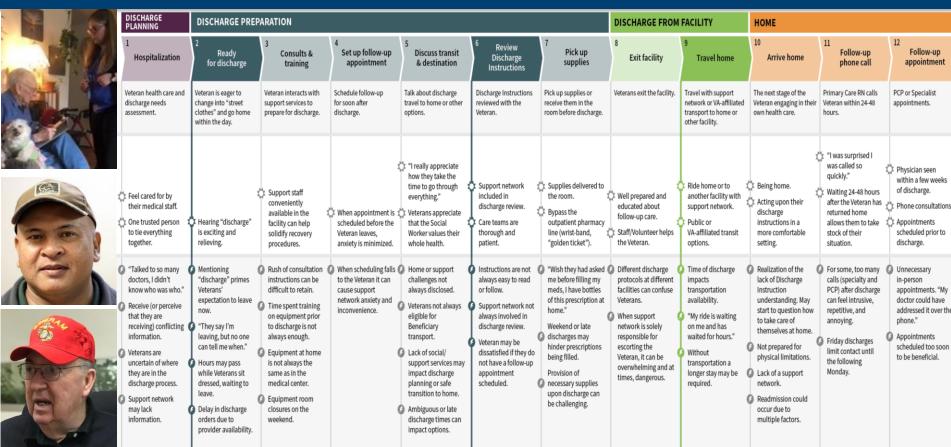
Moments that Matter: The Discharge Experience





MOMENT THAT MATTERS

I heard the word discharge and assumed I was about to leave.

When Veterans hear different members of their care teams mention discharge, they develop certain expectations. Not effectively managing these expectations leaves Veterans and their support network angry and frustrated.

MOMENT THAT MATTERS

I'm overwhelmed with all the information. How am I possibly going to remember this at home?

Veterans know the instructions they are receiving are important, but are typically overwhelmed or distracted. They are not always in the mindset to register the deluge of information or think through what care they will require at home.

MOMENT THAT MATTERS

I need to let my family know when to pick me up. I wish the doctor could give me a day and time.

Getting the method, timing, and destination correct can separate a good discharge from one riddled with frustration. Having a good hospitalization experience, followed by a poor facility departure, can damage a Veteran's entire experience.





Moments that Matter: The Hospitalization Experience

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	ADMISSION	ORIENTATION		TREATMENT, ASSESSMENT & RECOVERY				DISCHARGE PREPARATION
	Assessed by clinician	Get oriented	Understand care plan	4 Treatment	5 Bedside care	6 Talk to care team	7 Room activities	8 Prepare to leave hospital
	The moments leading up to a Veteran's inpatient stay; arriving at the hospital and the process of being admitted.	The Veteran is getting settled in their new environment and becoming familiar with people and surroundings.	The Veteran's first opportunity to engage with their health care team about their care plan. This engagement can either strengthen a foundation of trust or damage it.	This moment encompasses the medical treatment of the Veteran throughout their stay, including: tests, procedures, consults, recovery and observation.	Receiving the care determined by the care plan. This may include: monitoring, medication, pain management, bed comfort and fluid management.	The Veteran is able to interact with thei interdisciplinary care team to discuss their health and next steps.	r How the Veteran may use their time in their room; visiting with their support network, eating meals, therapy sessions and recreation.	Conversations with the Veteran about planning for their discharge.
Fernandez Terrendez	A positive arrival to the medical center is more likely to set a good tone for the rest of their stay.	Veterans want to know the daily routine. In some medical centers, a white board communicates essential information and updates in an easy-to-read way. Veterans appreciate when the nurse asks for their preferences.	Veterans value having a cohesive understanding of their care plan. "The caregivers recognized me from my last visit. They were all so friendly."	Having a well-defined plan and clear instructions reduces confusion about next steps. When a procedure goes well, the Veteran is more likely to feel positive about their experience.	Small interactions with the nursing staff make a big impression on the Veteran; such as ensuring that gowns are fully wrapped around the Veteran and being spoken to by name. Veterans appreciate being treated with dignity while toileting.	Veterans want autonomy about their health status. This means directly discussing recovery, needs and pain assessment with the care team. Veterans value regular interactions with their staff. "It is all about the small things! They knew what I needed before I did and I never had to ask for anything!"	"Talking with other Veterans on the floor keeps me grounded." Having the guidance of dietitians helps build healthy habits. "The people. They know you. They	Hearing "discharge" is exciting and relieving. Veterans appreciate when their care team considers their well-being past their inpatient stay. Veterans often want one trusted point person for their discharge plans.
	Veterans often arrive to the medical center feeling vulnerable, both physically and emotionally. They may struggle in coming to terms with their situation.	When there aren't immediate rooms available in inpatient units, the Veteran feels in limbo. Veterans don't want to feel rushed in talking to their nurse for the first time. They want to have access to nurses as they get settled in their rooms.	If family and friends of the Veteran are (left out of care plan conversations, the Veteran feels less supported. "My podiatrist was out the door before I could ask him a question." "I am sometimes confused because I hear different things from my day and night nurses, as well as doctors, and this information does not always add up."	Veterans can get frustrated when specialty tests delay their progress or speed of discharge.	The beds that alleviate pressure ulcers are uncomfortable for some Veterans. They often choose to sleep in their chair as a result. "I asked the team when they were going to check my vitals so I know if I have a block of time to sleep." "My bathroom in the ICU felt like a prison toilet."	"You have too many middle men." A Veteran may miss doctor interaction if they are asleep during rounding. Medical students sometimes make th Veteran feel like a test subject. Lack of specialty medical support car mean a more complicated care plan and complex daily communications. "It talked to so many doctors. I didn't know who was who."	Veterans. Veterans can be frustrated with their hospital diets, particularly when it	Once a Veteran hears the word "discharge" they might think they are immediately ready to leave and then become frustrated with perceived delays in their discharge process. Veterans are often uncertain of where they are in the discharge process.
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Being in the hospital is overhelming. Everything is unfamiliar. I don't feel good and I'm worried about my health.

Making certain a Veteran is well-oriented to their new surroundings can provide the foundation for an easier, less stressful inpatient stay. I need to know what tests or procedures are going to be done and why they are being done.

Establishing a trusted relationship between Veterans and providers is essential to a positive experience. Clear and transparent communication is key to alleviating fears and vulnerability.

I want time to speak with my nurses and doctors so that I can ask them about my treatment and prognosis.

When a Veteran is able to directly interact with their care team, trust is built, understanding increases and the Veteran feels more in control.

If I'm going to spend the night, I want to be comfortable and choose how I pass the time.

Veterans value having control over their daily activities, such as: meal quality and regularity, dignified toileting, bed comfort, and access to entertainment.



