

My Discharge and Follow-Up Plan

Work through this handoff with the care team before leaving. Keep their medication list and discharge instructions together with this plan. Mark an arrangement confirmed only when you have enough detail to use it.

Turn the discharge instructions into a usable plan

Continuing care can include appointments, medicines, recovery support and help with other health or practical needs. NIAAA's alcohol-treatment guidance recommends a discharge plan for ongoing support; SAMHSA also identifies support for other parts of life as a feature of quality care. The exact services should fit your assessment and preferences. [1] [2]

A referral versus an arrangement

You have	What to confirm
A provider's name	Are they accepting you, and can they deliver the service needed?
An appointment date	Time, location or video link, clinician, travel and contact if you cannot attend.
A medicine listed	Your team's exact instructions, how to obtain it, next prescriber/visit and whom to call if access fails.
A support suggestion	Whether you want it, how to contact it, any cost/access barrier and a backup.

If opioids have been part of your history

Tolerance can decrease after a period without opioids. Returning to an amount used previously can cause overdose. Ask the team about naloxone and have someone show you and a chosen supporter how to use it. Do not assume a previous dose is safe now. [3]

Recognize the emergency, not just the next appointment

If someone cannot be awakened or has slow/difficult breathing, give naloxone if opioid overdose is possible and it is available, call 911 and stay with them. Keep the team's separate instructions for routine questions and other urgent symptoms. [4]

Example of checking understanding

Original script: "Let me say the plan back: I will go to ____ on _____. I will obtain my medicine from _____. If that cannot happen, I call _____. What have I missed?"

Keep notes private. Write or type short notes. Use another copy if you need more room. Save and reopen the PDF to check your answers.

My next care

Next confirmed appointment

Professional/service, date, time, address/link, contact number and who confirmed it.

Medicine access

Attach the current medication list. Record pharmacy/clinic, pickup or dose appointment, supply questions and prescribing contact.

Symptoms and contact instructions

Copy the care team's instructions: what needs a routine call, prompt clinical advice, or emergency help. Include after-hours contacts.

My practical handoff

First place to stay and how I will get there

Transport, housing contact, access needs, food and phone/charging arrangements.

Support I choose

Person or service, what help I want, and what information I agree to share.

Still unconfirmed

Missing arrangement, person responsible, deadline and backup contact.

Keep completed notes private. Share only what you choose with the people helping you. These are original educational and planning prompts, not a validated assessment.

Useful next steps

[Find additional treatment options](https://findtreatment.gov/)

<https://findtreatment.gov/>

[Review signs of quality care](https://www.samhsa.gov/find-support/learn-about-treatment/finding-quality-treatment)

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Sources

[1] NIAAA: Questions for alcohol treatment programs (alcoholtreatment.niaaa.nih.gov)

[2] SAMHSA: Finding quality treatment (samhsa.gov)

[3] CDC: Clinical Practice Guideline for Prescribing Opioids for Pain, 2022 (cdc.gov)

[4] CDC: Preventing Opioid Overdose (cdc.gov)