



Planning for your child's discharge from a mental health treatment program: Home checklist

After a child or youth has been through a mental health care and treatment program, a well-planned transition back to home and everyday activities is crucial for their continued recovery. Parents should start discharge planning as soon as their child has been admitted to a treatment program. This checklist is intended for a parents to use in collaboration with treatment staff when planning for their child's transition back to their home and community.

If your child is being discharged because insurance will no longer cover the cost of the program, turn to the end of this checklist for steps that you can take.

DISCHARGE DATE:

IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS TO GATHER

- ☐ Discharge summary and plan
- ☐ Records of psychological testing completed during treatment
- ☐ Records of medical testing completed during treatment
- ☐ School records (if treatment program provided education)
- ☐ Written prescriptions for medication refills (if applicable)

IMPORTANT INFORMATION about your child's progress; diagnosis and how it impacts them; medication side effects to watch for; other important information shared by staff:

MEDICATION SCHEDULE

Medication:

Dosage:

Time of day:

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

PROFESSIONAL CARE AFTER DISCHARGE

Recommended treatment options:

- ☐ Outpatient therapy
 - ☐ Individual therapy Frequency: _____
 - ☐ Group therapy Frequency: _____
 - ☐ Family therapy Frequency: _____
- ☐ Intensive outpatient program
- ☐ Partial hospitalization program
- ☐ Day treatment program
- ☐ Residential treatment program
- ☐ Chemical dependency program

Recommended programs or providers:

What therapeutic approach is recommended for my child? Why do you recommend this approach?

Programs or providers covered by insurance:

If your child was discharged due to a lack of progress or because the program was not a good fit for your child:

What were the challenges for my child in this program?

How will the recommended treatment better meet my child's needs?

LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

Will my child be returning home after discharge?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

What steps should I take to prepare my home for my child's discharge?

If your child will not be living at home or you are considering other living arrangements:

Where will my child live or what are some living arrangements I can consider after discharge?

- ☐ With a family member or friend
- ☐ Group home
- ☐ Crisis shelter
- ☐ Respite foster home
- ☐ Residential treatment facility
- ☐ Detention or correctional center
- ☐ Other: _____

Who do I need to contact to set up or get more information about living arrangements? *Include names, phone numbers, and email addresses*

CRISIS PLANNING

Whom should I contact if my child's symptoms worsen after discharge? *Include names, phone numbers, and email addresses*

Do I need a crisis plan when my child returns home?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Whom should I contact to help me write a crisis plan? *Consider including your child's therapist or mental health provider, family members, or other trusted individuals. Include names, phone numbers, and email addresses*

My county's crisis response phone number: _____

For more information about crisis planning, see PACER's handout Crisis Management Plan: Support at Home for Children and Youth with Mental Health Needs: media.pacer.org/php/php-c225.pdf

PLANNING FOR SELF-HARMING BEHAVIOR

I am concerned my child may harm themselves after leaving this care and treatment program:

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

What actions do staff recommend I take to help keep my child safe after discharge?

Whom should I contact for a risk assessment if I am concerned that my child is planning to harm themselves?
Include names, phone numbers, and email addresses

Family/friends to contact and ask for help supervising my child when I am not available:

COUNTY SERVICES

My county's phone number for children's mental health case management is: _____

Other recommended county services:

PARENT SELF-CARE AFTER DISCHARGE

Are there any parent support groups nearby or organizations that may be able to help me connect to a support group?

Fill this contact information in before your child is discharged. Remember that these are people who want to support you and your child during their recovery.

Family/friends/members of my faith community I will contact when I need help or emotional support:

What to do if your insurance company stops covering treatment

While many children and youth will successfully reach their treatment goals and have new skills to help them manage the symptoms of their mental health disorder, others may be discharged because they are not making progress on their treatment goals or not engaging in the program. It is important to gather input from treatment staff about what didn't work for your child, and ask for treatment recommendations after discharge.

If your health insurance carrier has been covering treatment AND your child is making progress towards treatment goals and their licensed mental health care provider believes treatment is still medically necessary, there are some steps you can take:

- Contact your insurance carrier and ask them to explain why your child's treatment is no longer being covered
- Ask your child's mental health care provider to write a letter to the insurance carrier documenting their opinion that treatment is medically necessary
- Request the insurance carrier send an Explanation of Benefits and check to make sure the claim was not denied because of a billing error
- File an appeal with your insurance carrier. If the claim is still denied, you have the right to request an independent review from a third party.