THE CARE PARTNER PROJECT™

How to Get the Care You Want
for the People You Love

CHECKLIST

MANAGING YOUR EMERGENCY ROOM VISIT

UPON CHECK IN

☐ Provide Photo ID, Insurance Card and Medical Power of Attorney

☐ Tell admission clerk that you have all medical records and an up-to-date medication list with you.

If your loved one suffers from dementia, or is experiencing confusion, ask if the hospital offers a separate "quiet room" to help your loved one feel calm and secure.

☐ If your loved one is upset, agitated and nurse or doctor suggest a medication to calm your loved one, ask about:

- A quiet room, instead
- If not an option and your loved one is truly disruptive and does not respond to the items you've brought in your "go bag," a medication may be ordered. Ask before it's given to your loved one:
  - Name of drug (common name)
  - Does it have Black Box warning?
  - On the **Beers List?**
  - Look up on **Medline.**
  - Are there alternative medications?

☐ Ask: *"When do you think a doctor will see us?"*

WHILE WAITING FOR CARE

☐ Discuss with loved one exactly what they are feeling. Where is pain? Pain level on a 1-10 scale?

☐ Ask your loved one:

- What do you think is wrong? Why?
- What are your questions for the doctor?
- What are your worries?
- What is your goal for treatment today? What do you want to happen today?

☐ Take notes of this conversation to share with your loved one's doctor(s) and other care providers seen in the ER.

Consider: Take a photo of your notes with your phone, then give your notes to the admission desk and tell them you are prepared to meet the doctor. This may be a gentle way of nudging you higher on the waiting list.

DURING EXAM WITH DOCTOR

☐ Ask if you can tape record conversations so you can take can take notes later and be fully present during time with the doctor. If helpful, ask if you can FaceTime the visit with someone else who may be involved with the care of your loved one.

continued

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CHECKLIST

MANAGING YOUR EMERGENCY ROOM VISIT *continued*

DURING EXAM WITH DOCTOR *continued*

☐ Review your loved one's medication list with nurse. Tell nurse of any medications that have been taken that day and few days prior, including herbs, vitamins and any other "drugstore" type remedies.

☐ Describe clearly and calmly the medical concern to the nurse and doctor (notes will help).

☐ For each test the doctor orders, ask:

- What will we learn?
- Is this information a "nice to know" or "need to know" in order to diagnose or treat?
- Ask the doctor for their initial thoughts, or diagnosis.

☐ For every diagnosis, ask: *"What else could it be?" (See The Care Partner Project's Diagnosis Checklist.)*

☐ Stay with your loved one.

AT POINT OF DIAGNOSIS

☐ Take time to fully understand the diagnosis—don't rush *(see The Care Partner Project's Diagnosis Checklist)*.

☐ Review and understand any new prescriptions.

- What are the side effects?
- If new prescriptions are started, what is the length of time medication will be needed?
- Ask, "Is this medication on The Beers List?" or look it up yourself.

DURING DISCHARGE CONVERSATION

☐ Ask for Bedside Huddle with doctor, nurse and pharmacist

☐ Recording or using FaceTime may be an option.

☐ Ask questions and ask for plain terms

☐ Ask for copy of record of visit, including the doctor notes

FOR RECOVERY AT HOME WITH FAMILY MEMBER CARE GIVER

☐ Review existing and new prescription list

☐ Print a new prescription list

☐ Monitor closely any changes over the next 24-72 hours after taking new prescriptions. Look up on Medline.

☐ Keep daily record of time(s) medication is being given. (Easy to grab in case of being rushed back to the ER.)

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