

IPU FAQs

Discharge from the Inpatient Unit (IPU)

Patients are admitted to the IPU for a number of reasons.

Some patients may be experiencing uncontrolled symptoms such as pain and may benefit from a symptom control admission, whilst others may be nearing the end of life and require specialist palliative care at this time.

How long will I stay on the IPU for?

St Raphael's isn't a long-stay facility and the length of your stay will vary depending on your individual needs. You might only be with us for a few days, or if your needs are more complex, you might be with us a little while longer. The Hospice team will work together to address your needs and assess how long you need to stay. The team will discuss potential discharge plans with you and those important to you before any decisions are made. We know it can be daunting moving on from the Hospice IPU, so we will do all we can to listen to your preferences and facilitate your onward discharge.

When will the Hospice team start talking about discharge planning?

Please don't worry if we start talking about discharge within a few days of your admission. This is perfectly normal. Some discharge arrangements can take time to sort out and it's often best we start early, meaning that care, equipment and any other services can be arranged in good time if you move on from the Hospice. Sometimes plans for discharge may be started and then you become less well, so plans will be put on hold. This is sometimes referred to as 'dual planning'.

Where will I be looked after when I leave the Hospice?

You may choose to go home with a package of care. If you are in need of 24-hour care, a nursing home may be the best option, where nurses are readily available 24/7 to care for you and provide medications if / when required.

Will I have to pay for carers at home or for a Nursing Home?

Most of the patients we look after will be eligible for NHS Fast Track funded care arranged through The NHS Continuing Healthcare Team.

Can I choose which Nursing Home I go to?

When we complete the application to the NHS Continuing Healthcare Team we will ask for your preferred choice of Nursing Home. While they will try to meet your wishes, unfortunately not all nursing homes can be funded by the NHS and your preference may not be available. We are sorry for any distress this may cause. Alternatively, you may choose to self-fund a nursing home of your choice. We need to ensure whichever nursing home you move to has the skills needed to look after you. While you're making your decision, if you, or those important to you, have any queries or concerns, please talk to us.

What will care at home look like?

Care at home can be a maximum of 2 carers visiting up to 4 times a day but will be dependent upon your requirements. The NHS Continuing Healthcare Team will source a care agency in your area with the skills required to meet your care needs. These carers are not trained nurses and therefore they cannot administer medication. If you require injections or a syringe pump whilst at home, we will liaise with your GP and District Nursing Team who can visit you at home. The Inpatient Team with the help of our occupational therapist will discuss any equipment that may be needed to ensure your comfort at home. This may include a hospital bed, which we will arrange for you.


Some patients may find climbing stairs more difficult on their return home and we may recommend setting up a bedroom downstairs.

Will I still be under the care of the Hospice on discharge?

Yes. St Raphael's Community Palliative Care Team will continue to support your care whether you return home or move to a Nursing Home, alongside your GP and the District Nursing Team. Should you decide to reside out of area then we will refer you to the appropriate local Hospice.

Can I come back to the Hospice in the last days of my life?

Many of our patients prefer to stay at home or in their nursing home for end of life care with support from the Community Palliative Care Team. However, if your palliative care needs are complex and cannot be met in your current place of care, admission to the Hospice may be arranged if a bed is available. While we will do whatever we can to meet your preferred place of care, unfortunately a hospice bed is not always available and support in your place of care will continue.



**For further
assistance
and advice**

Contact us

If there is anything you're concerned about once you're home or in your nursing home, you can call us for advice, anytime of the day or night, on 020 8099 7777

St Raphael's Hospice

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