

Home Care – a beneficial option for your patients during COVID-19

Patients at high risk for, or with confirmed or suspected COVID-19, can be safely discharged to home when it is clinically indicated. This allows for

- Coordinated, personalized care at home
- Minimal exposure risk from group or public settings
- Reduction of fear for patient and family members

Home care clinicians collaborate with providers to

- Establish plan of care with appropriate goals, interventions, and visit frequencies
- Monitor, teach, and assess patients
- Provide simple to complex interventions and procedures
- Facilitate telehealth implementation
- Reduce ED visits and rehospitalizations

Home care clinicians can provide

- **Complex cares** including but not limited to: IVs, trach cares, feeding tubes, oxygen therapy, catheters, ostomies, venipunctures, central line management, wounds
- **Skilled interventions**
 - Disease assessment and monitoring
 - Rehabilitation therapy (physical, occupational, speech)
 - Medication education and management
- Home **safety** assessments
- Patient and caregiver **education**
 - Infection control practices
 - Visitation limitations
- **Coordination of services**
 - Medical supplies and Durable Medical Equipment
 - Home Health Aide
 - Non-medical assistance
 - Medical Social Services
- **Emergency preparedness**
 - Infection/pandemic
 - Natural disaster
 - Loss of power or other resources
- Seamless transition to **Hospice**

Home care clinicians

- Are trained in infection control practices following CDC guidelines
- Screen all patients prior to provision of care as well as self-screen daily for COVID-19
- Utilize best practices along with ongoing quality improvement

Initiating home care

If you think home care might be beneficial for your patient, contact a local home care agency to explore the option

The agency will determine if they can take on the case, and they take responsibility for assessing the patient to determine eligibility

There is rarely a situation too simple or too complex for home care. The agency will let you know if this patient exceeds those boundaries

Hospital discharge planners may have a list of local home care agencies, or you may search for home health agencies by location at www.Medicare.gov/HomeHealthCompare

The goals of home care (AMA)

Improve the health and quality of life of the patient through comprehensive primary medical care and nursing and rehabilitative services

Reduce the need for hospitalization and nursing home and other institutional placement

Provide support for the informal caregiver

Reduce emergency department visits

Reduce hospital length of stay and the risk of hospital readmission

Allow terminal patients to die at home in comfort if that is their wish

Enhance optimal growth and development of infants and children

Enhance functional potential of patients on life-sustaining devices

The benefits of home care during COVID-19

Patients and family members are afraid to be admitted to a facility due to increased proximity to COVID-positive patients, risk of infection

Helps keep hospital & TCU beds available for more critical patients

Home Care professionals are already well-versed in infection control

In-home COVID-19 testing; education on infection control

Nurses collaborate with providers while in the patient's home to adjust treatment plans, minimizing office or ED visits

Facilitation of and education on telehealth

Easier assessment of social determinants: Isolation/loneliness; home cleanliness and safety; exercise/activity

Follow-up option for patients who choose to self-discharge against medical advice