Hospital Stay Caregiver Organizer

A bedside organizer for daily updates, care-team names, tests, questions and family handoffs

Use this organizer to record what the hospital team tells you.
It is designed to help you keep the moving story of a multi-day hospital stay organized. Medical interpretation and treatment decisions belong with the treating clinicians.

Today's snapshot

Start a new page each day so yesterday's plan does not quietly become today's plan.

Date / Hospital Day	Room / Unit	Family contact

If you only track five things today

- ☐ Who gave the update and what role they have.
- ☐ What changed today.
- ☐ What the team says is supposed to happen next.
- ☐ What is still pending.
- ☐ The first unanswered question for the next conversation.

Today's plan, in the care team's words

Today's care team

Hospital teams can rotate by shift or by day. Record names and roles so you know who is handling what.

Name / Role	Service or Job	When / Shift

Rounds / shift-change notes

Listen for what makes today's plan different from yesterday's.

- ☐ What changed since the last update?
- ☐ What is the main plan for today?
- ☐ What tests, procedures or consultations are expected?
- ☐ What is still uncertain?
- ☐ What needs to happen before the next decision?
- ☐ Who is expected to come back with the next answer?

Notes from today's update

Tests, procedures & consultations

Track status without trying to interpret the medical meaning yourself.

Item	Ordered / Completed / Pending	Who explains next

Questions about pending items

Record, do not translate. If a term, result or plan is unclear, ask the appropriate clinician to explain it in plain language.

Medication conversations

Capture what was discussed so you can ask the treating clinicians or pharmacist about anything unclear.

Medication / Topic	Started / Stopped / Changed	Who explained / Question

Do not use this organizer to decide whether a medication should be given, stopped or changed. Medication decisions belong with the treating clinicians and pharmacist.

Running question list

Questions often appear after the person who could answer them has left the room.

Question	Who should answer?	Answered / Next step

Family coverage & handoff

If relatives rotate through the hospital, hand off the current story deliberately.

Coverage / Task	Person	When

Five-minute family handoff

- [ ] Who is on the care team today?
- [ ] What changed?
- [ ] What is the plan for the rest of today?
- [ ] What is pending?
- [ ] What question still needs an answer?

Before you leave for the night

Create a five-line snapshot another family member can understand tomorrow morning.

- [ ] Today's biggest change
- [ ] What happened today
- [ ] What is expected next
- [ ] What is still pending
- [ ] The first question to ask tomorrow

End-of-day notes

Contacts & additional notes

Keep the names and numbers you were given in one place.

Contact / Role	Name / Organization	Phone / How to reach

Additional notes

Important: This organizer is designed to help family caregivers organize information shared during a hospital stay. It is educational and organizational only and is not a substitute for medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Medical interpretation and treatment decisions belong with the health care professionals involved in your family member's care. In an emergency, contact emergency services.

Developed using: United Hospital Fund / Next Step in Care hospital-stay materials; AHRQ patient-and-family engagement resources; and University of Wisconsin-Madison Bedside Notes work.

Designed with care. Built for Clarity.