

Skilled Nursing Program Allows Patients to Recover Near Home

Swing Bed at Knox County Hospital offers patients extended care for a smoother transition.

Knox, TX (Jan. 17, 2022) – Recovering from a hospital procedure far away from home can bring on stress and worry for patients and their families. In Knox County, a specialized program allows patients covered under Medicare who are not quite ready to go home to recover in a hospital setting right here in the community.

The Recovery Near Home Program (Swing Bed) at Knox County Hospital District offers extended skilled nursing care to patients recovering from a hospital procedure without the need to change facilities. This unique program acts as a bridge between the hospital and home, offering peace of mind to both patients and their families and allowing a more comfortable recovery.

“A smooth and successful recovery requires that patients receive the care they need, when they need it,” said Stephen Kuehler, CEO at Knox County Hospital District. “This program makes sure our patients get the personalized care they need so they can more easily transition back to their everyday lives. It is also comforting for families, who know that their loved one is receiving the care he or she needs near home.”

Recovery Near Home, also known as Swing Bed, is designed for patients covered under Medicare who have been admitted to the hospital for at least three days and are not quite ready to go home. Patients may not be ready to be discharged for a variety of reasons, including not having the healthcare resources at home to take care of themselves.

The program is often referred to as Swing Bed in the medical community. A Swing Bed doesn’t actually swing physically, but it swings in the way Medicare reimburses for the care provided to the patient. With Swing Bed, the hospital can “swing” a patient’s level of care from acute to skilled rehabilitation. If acute care is needed again, the patient can be “swung” back, meaning there is no need to change facilities.

Under the federally funded Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility Program (Flex Program), Swing Bed services are fully covered by Medicare for the first 20 days. When care is required past the first 20 days, Medicare becomes a co-insurance that pays for a portion of the service.

MORE

Skilled Nursing Program Allows Patients to Recover Near Home in Knox Page 2

As part of the Recovery Near Home program, patients recovering from an acute condition have access to 24-hour skilled nursing services, including nursing, wound care and physical therapy.

Patients can be admitted to the program for a variety of reasons, especially for extended care following extensive surgery such as a hip replacement or open-heart surgery, neurological disorders such as stroke and generalized weakness due to certain chronic conditions.

A referral from a physician is required for the Recovery Near Home Program when it is determined that skilled care will be needed. The Swing Bed Coordinator then arranges admission to the program. The program also accepts patients from other facilities so they can recover close to home.

Patients can remain in skilled care as long as there is a documented need for that level of care. Care plans must be developed with a physician at the beginning of the stay that establishes progressive goals of recovery.

“Ensuring that our patients don’t have to leave the community for recovery services is just another way we are looking out for the health and wellness of our neighbors,” Kuehler said. “You can take comfort knowing that the healthcare services you depend on are right around the corner in Knox County.”

The Recovery Near Home program is available to anyone who qualifies for Medicare and is in medically documented need of the services that the program offers. For more information, please call Knox County Hospital District at 940-657-3535 or visit www.knoxhospital.org.

About Knox County Hospital District

Founded in 1926, Knox County Hospital District provides healthcare for residents of Knox County and surrounding areas. The district offers a wealth of medical services, including 24-hour emergency care, advanced radiology services, a clinical laboratory, home health, physical therapy, long-term care, patient education, and more. For additional information, please call 940-657-3535 or visit www.knoxhospital.org.

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