

# **Be Ready to Return Home from the Hospital**

According to the Centers for Disease Control, 7% of the overall population and 15% of people over age 65 had an overnight hospital stay in 2015. It can be an overwhelming time for families and especially taxing on adults over age 75.

VNA Community Healthcare & Hospice, in conjunction with the Health Neighborhood, developed a list of things you can do to get ready to return home from the hospital or a facility. Make sure you speak with your discharge planner before you leave the hospital to ask questions and see what services will be covered by your insurance after discharge.

## **MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS**

Schedule a follow-up appointment with your primary physician and specialist. Determine how you will get to the office. Make sure you bring all your current medications with you, so that your doctor can review them.

## **MEDICATIONS**

Managing your medications is crucial to your recovery and well-being. Talk to your doctor about any new medications given to you at discharge and those you have at home. He/she will determine which medications are right for you. Make sure you use one pharmacy so that it is easy for you to pick them up or have them delivered. Ask for an easy open package, if you need one, and speak up if you are unable to pay for your medications.

## **WELCOME HOME**

Returning home from a hospital stay could require some changes to your house. You may have to change where you sleep to avoid stairs or to be near a bathroom. If you need a device, such as a cane or walker, make sure you know how to use it properly or ask for help. You may not be feeling well enough to shop, cook or clean for yourself, you may need to make plans with your family or hire a service.

## **GET ORGANIZED**

Determine who will be able to help you and be sure to have their contact information. Decide how you are going to get medical supplies or equipment. Be sure to write things down and prioritize what is most important to you.

For further information, call the VNA Community Healthcare & Hospice's help line at 866-474-5230.