

Getting organised for an inpatient stay

If you're going into hospital, you want to be comfortable there so you can concentrate on getting better. You don't want to worry about things at home, or to have forgotten items you need. The checklist below will get you prepared without getting you stressed or confused.

1. Things to do before I go

Tell people I'm going into hospital	Write the people's names below	Tick when you've told them
<p><i>You might want to tell friends or relatives, your employer if you work, your GP or one of the workers at your mental health service and anyone involved in your treatment plan.</i></p> <p><i>An easy way of working out who to tell is to think of the people who'd worry about you if they didn't know where you were.</i></p>		
What do I need to do at home before I go?	Things to do	Tick when you've done it
<p><i>This could be things like making sure any pets you have are going to be looked after, reminding yourself to turn things like the TV and taps off, paying any bills and asking a neighbour to collect your mail.</i></p> <p><i>An easy way of working out what to do is to think of things you DON'T want to happen, for example, the house to be flooded, your pets to be hungry or lonely – and then make sure that doesn't happen.</i></p>		

2. Things to find out before I go into the hospital

Question	Answer
About my stay	
What do I need to bring?	
Do I have to bring my medication*? <small>*You will not be able to self-medicate.</small>	
Can I bring my mobile phone?	
Can I have my mobile phone on the ward with me if it has a camera?	
Can I bring headphones?	
Do I have to share a room?	
Can I smoke?	
Will I have internet access/can I bring my computer?	
What personal products can I bring, for example shampoo, nail polish, wet razor, electric razor? <small>*If you are quite unwell, you will most likely not be able to have a razor.</small>	
Am I allowed to have visitors?	
Will I be able to leave the unit?	
Will I have a locker for my valuables?	
Will I be able to wash my clothes or will I need to bring enough for my whole stay?	
Can I bring food or drink?	
About my treatment	
How often will I see a psychiatrist/doctor?	
Will they speak to my current doctor/psychiatrist?	
Will my current mental health provider be involved in my treatment plan?	
Will they speak to my carer and involve them in my treatment plan?	
How long before I leave will discharge planning start?	
You may have special requirements e.g. relating to your diet or religion. Make sure to ask the hospital how they can accommodate these.	

3. My packing list

What to take to hospital (and what to bring home)

General advice: leave anything valuable, like jewellery or large amounts of money, at home.

Item	Packed to go into hospital	Packed to come home from hospital
<i>Cards and information</i>		
Medicare card		
Pension/concession card		
Pharmacy benefits card		
A copy of my advance statement		
<i>Medication</i>		
A list of your current medications, including the dosage and frequency taken		
All prescribed medications in blister packs or pharmacy-dispensed packaging		
Any vitamins and over-the-counter medications you take		
<i>Therapy aids</i>		
e.g. Mindfulness CDs		
<i>Clothes – bring loose, comfortable clothing, and remember it's usually warm in hospital</i>		
T-shirts		
Jumpers		
Pants/jeans		
Pyjamas/dressing gown		
Underwear		
Socks		
Shoes (comfy runners if you want to go for a walk, preferably without laces)		
Glasses or contact lenses		
Hearing devices		
<i>Toiletries – the hospital will provide towels. They may have basic toiletries, but you'll probably prefer your own</i>		
Soap		
Deodorant (roll-on)		
Toothpaste		
Toothbrush		
Shampoo		
Hairbrush or comb		
Body/face cream		
Pads or tampons/incontinence pads		
<i>Things to pass the time</i>		
Books		
Magazines		
Crosswords/puzzles/Sudoku		
Notebook and pens		
Craft/hobby materials (but seek permission first)		
Phone		