



At Home



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Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Health**



**WA Primary
Health Alliance**
Better health, together

phn
PERTH NORTH, PERTH SOUTH,
COUNTRY WA

An Australian Government Initiative



If you are Aboriginal, this booklet has been designed to help you prepare to leave hospital.

The Department of Health and WA Primary Health Alliance acknowledges the Aboriginal people of the many traditional lands and language groups of WA.

We acknowledge the wisdom of Aboriginal Elders both past and present and pay respect to the Aboriginal Communities of today.

Within WA, the term Aboriginal is used in preference to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, in recognition that Aboriginal people are the original inhabitants of WA.



Artists: Wendy Waye, Rita Minga, Julia Lawford, Jean Tighe and Elsie Dickens.

The painting has been created by five women Elders from the Walmajarri language group of the Fitzroy River Valley. The painting is made up of five individual parts that tell a similar story relating to the hospital journey – one that revolves around collecting and eating bush foods, bush medicines, talking with doctors and working with Maparn (traditional healers).

Managing your condition at home



- Follow the instructions the hospital staff gave you about taking your medicines and doing your exercises.
- Make sure to go to all your follow up appointments.
- It is common to feel sad or down, or have trouble coping after serious illness or surgery. Contact your GP or Aboriginal Medical Service (AMS) clinic as soon as possible if you would like to talk. They are there to help you.
- You may also find it helpful to have a yarn with someone about how you are feeling - like a friend, health professional, your care coordinator, or patient support group.

Taking medicines at home



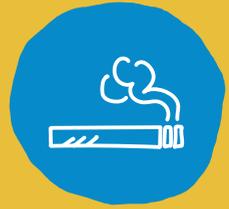
- Keep a list of all the medicines you take, including vitamins, and bush medicines.
- Use a dosage box from the supermarket or chemist to help you remember to take your medicines at the right times.
- Keep your medicines out of reach of children and pets.
- Ask your local chemist or clinic to dispose of your unused or out-of-date medicines.
- Ask your chemist for a list of your regular medicines or to put your medicines into an easy to use Webster-pak[®]. This shows you how to take the right medicine at the right time.



Taking the right medicine at the right time will help you get well.

Smoking

If you stopped smoking while you were in hospital and want to give up smoking for good or if you want to take steps to give up smoking now you are home:



- talk to your GP (or care coordinator) about getting cheaper nicotine patches
- call the Aboriginal Quitline service and ask to speak an Aboriginal counsellor – phone 13 78 48.

Keep your mind healthy

A healthy mind will help you recover better from your hospital stay. There are lots of ways to keep your mind strong. You could:



- yarn with friends and family
- learn or teach culture
- paint, dance or play music
- join in community events
- go out on Country.



Avoid alcohol and drugs; they can mix badly with your medicines.

What to do if I feel sick



If you start to feel sick after leaving hospital, it is important you get help straight away. You could:

- go to your GP
- go to your local AMS.

Take your hospital papers with you so that the doctor can see what happened at the hospital.

- call Healthdirect for free health advice:
call 1800 022 222 or visit the Healthdirect website
(www.healthdirect.gov.au)

If it's an emergency:

- go to the closest hospital emergency department or
- call an ambulance – dial 000.



Where my family and I can get more help



Sometimes after being sick you or your family might need some extra help. Some of the places that can help you:

- **Your local Aboriginal Medical Service.**
- **Your GP.**
- **Integrated Team Care** – can help you coordinate your health care needs. Speak to your GP for a referral.

Additional contacts

- **Helpingminds** – organisation that support people and families affected by mental illness.
Phone 1800 811 74
- **Quitline** (Aboriginal counsellor).
Phone 13 78 48
- **Carers WA** – support for carers.
Phone 1300 227 377
- **Health Consumers Council** – Advocacy organisation for people needing help with the health system.
Phone 1800 620 780
- **Advocare** – organisation that supports and protects the rights of older people and people with disabilities.
Phone 1800 655 566
- **People with Disabilities WA (PwDWA)** – organisation that supports and advocates for people with disabilities.
Phone 1800 193 331

This document can be made available in alternative formats on request for a person with disability.

Produced by Patient Safety and Clinical Quality
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