Between Hospital and Home: When Post-Acute Rehabilitation Can Help
Walk into a long-term care facility nowadays, and you might be surprised at what you see: younger and healthier people who are there to get well and go home following a hospital stay. Today’s skilled nursing and rehabilitation facilities have become a bridge to recovery for a growing number of people, for issues ranging from stroke and heart attack to post-surgical rehabilitation.

Generations ago, people would often recuperate from surgery or illness in the hospital, after which they would return to their homes. For example, the length of a hospital stay for acute myocardial infarction (heart attack) was more than 10 days in the 1980s, over twice what it is today. Long-term care facilities, on the other hand, often carried the stereotype of a nursing home: places that largely existed for elderly people who could no longer function on their own.

Today, these stereotypes have changed dramatically. Today’s long-term care facilities are places of healing and wellness, and an important part of the overall health care system. This report is designed to help you understand when skilled post-acute care might be appropriate for you or your loved ones, and how it can benefit you.

The revolution in post-acute care

Nowadays we use the term “post-acute care” to describe care facilities for people discharged from traditional hospitals, known in the medical profession as acute-care facilities. Post-acute care serves as a valuable resource for many people following hospitalization, for several important reasons that benefit patients and caregivers alike:

• Long-term care facilities, such as skilled nursing and rehabilitation facilities, now offer much higher levels of medical care. Many have on-site physicians, pharmacies, and rehabilitation specialists as well as other services.

• Post-acute care is substantially less expensive than a hospital stay. Today’s reality of rising health care costs and specialization means that short hospital stays are now the rule rather than the exception. Modern skilled nursing and rehabilitation facilities make quality care affordable and accessible for all of us outside the hospital.

• People can recover in a comfortable residential setting with many of the comforts of home. Could you grab a snack, meet other people, or engage in recreational activities at a hospital? Or be served high-quality meals in a dining room? Long-term care helps your recovery take place in a setting that lets you start living your life again.

Most people want to be home as soon as possible after health care treatment. Post-acute care has become part of a team effort in helping people recover quickly, while making the recovery process a good experience.
When is post-acute care right for you?

Decisions on post-acute care start with the discharge planning process at your hospital, where a medical assessment will be made about what level of care may be needed: for example, skilled nursing, sub-acute rehabilitation, infusion therapy, or home care.

When care at a post-acute facility makes clinical sense, you often have options about what facility to choose. Here are some guidelines from the US National Institutes of Health:

- How many patients with your problem have they cared for?
- Do they have a pathway, or protocol, for taking care of patients with your medical condition?
- Do they have physical therapists who work at the facility?
- Will you see the same one or two therapists most days?
- Do they provide therapy every day, including Saturday and Sunday?
- How long do the therapy sessions last?
- If your primary care doctor or surgeon does not visit the facility, will there be a doctor in charge of your care?
- Will staff take the time to train you and your family or caregivers about care you will need at the home?

Then there are important quality and comfort factors to consider: is the facility clean and inviting? Does it provide good meals? Are the staff attentive to the needs of both the patient and his or her family? Finally, reputation in the community is important: awards, recognition, and recommendations from others can also help you make the right choice for you or your loved ones.

Post-acute care: The Bartley Difference

A leader in quality care, Bartley Healthcare Nursing and Rehabilitation offers comprehensive social, medical, nursing, and support programs to our long term residents. We have assembled the finest staff of professionals with the expertise and experience to meet each resident’s needs.

Our long term care staff and services include:

- Physicians on-site daily
- Geriatrician, physiatrist, geriatric nurse practitioners, certified case managers and social workers
- Comprehensive physical, occupational and speech therapy
- Dental, podiatry, optometry services available
- Comprehensive therapeutic recreation program
- Beauty parlor/barber shop
- Wheelchair-accessible van
- Religious services for all denominations
- Admissions 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
About Bartley Healthcare

Since its founding in 1985, Bartley Healthcare has been providing superior medical service and quality care in a clean and pleasant environment. We are dedicated to servicing the needs of our community and especially the special needs of our individual residents, patients, and family members. This philosophy has been recognized as the “Bartley Difference.”

Our awards and honors include the Silver Quality Award from the American Health Care Association/National Center for Assisted Living and the Joint Commission on the Accreditation of Healthcare Organization’s Gold Seal of Approval™, among many others, and we serve as consultants to numerous other healthcare organizations. To learn more about us, contact us at:

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