

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP): Patient Education and Discharge Instructions

This SOP details the process for **patient education and discharge instructions**, encompassing clear communication of diagnosis, treatment plans, medication usage, follow-up care, lifestyle modifications, and warning signs of complications. The goal is to ensure patients understand their health conditions, adhere to prescribed therapies, and safely transition from healthcare facilities to home care, thereby improving health outcomes and reducing readmission rates.

1. Purpose

To standardize the procedure for providing comprehensive patient education and effective discharge instructions to facilitate patient understanding, safety, and continuity of care.

2. Scope

This SOP applies to all clinical staff involved in patient care, education, and discharge planning within the facility.

3. Responsibilities

- **Physicians:** Confirm diagnoses, explain treatment plans, and ensure patient understanding.
- **Nurses:** Deliver detailed education, demonstrate equipment/medication usage, and review discharge instructions.
- **Pharmacists:** Educate on medication administration, side effects, and adherence.
- **Case Managers/Social Workers:** Coordinate follow-up care and community resources.

4. Procedure

1. Assessment of Patient Needs:

- Assess patient's readiness to learn, literacy level, language preferences, and any sensory or cognitive impairments.

2. Provision of Education:

- Communicate diagnosis and overview of health condition using plain language.
- Discuss treatment plan, including procedures and goals.
- Educate on prescribed medications: name, dose, frequency, route, duration, side effects, and special instructions.
- Demonstrate use of medical equipment if needed.
- Discuss necessary lifestyle modifications (diet, exercise, smoking cessation, etc.).

3. Discharge Instructions:

- Review home care instructions and warning signs requiring immediate medical attention.
- Provide written instructions and supplemental materials in the patient's preferred language.
- Confirm and schedule follow-up appointments.
- List emergency contact information.

4. Verification of Understanding:

- Utilize the teach-back method/return demonstration to confirm understanding.
- Encourage questions and address concerns.
- Document patient education and discharge instructions provided in the medical record.

5. Documentation

- Record details of education delivered, materials provided, patient's response, and any follow-up actions in the patient's record.

6. References

- Facility policies on patient education and discharge planning
- National Patient Safety Goals

7. Revision History

Date	Version	Description of Change	Author
2024-06-12	1.0	Initial SOP template created	Health Documentation Team