

## Medical Terms All Patients Should Know

**Admission:** When a health care provider decides that a patient needs to come into the inpatient units of a hospital for care

**Diagnosis:** Naming of a disease or illness, also known as a condition

**Discharge:** When a patient leaves the hospital and may go home or to another health care facility, such as a rehabilitation center or skilled nursing facility

**Discharge Planning:** Planning that takes place before you leave the hospital

**Follow-up Visits:** Doctor's office visits that you schedule and go to after leaving the hospital

**Health Care Provider:** A person, like a doctor or a nurse, who provides health care

**Health Care Team:** A team of medical persons, like a doctor, nurse or therapist, who provide care for the mind, body and spirit

**Home Health Care:** Care you receive from a doctor, nurse or therapist in your home after leaving the hospital

**Hospitalist:** A health care provider who takes care of patients throughout the hospital admission but does not see patients outside the hospital <sup>1</sup>

**In-Patient:** A person who is admitted to the hospital

**Length of Stay:** The number of days that a patient remains in the hospital

**Medication Management:** Knowing which medication(s) you need to take at what time, why you need to take them, and how to take them

**Medication Reconciliation:** Looking at which medications you are taking at home and what you are given at the time of admission or entry into a new health care setting or level of care

**Observation:** When the clinical team at the hospital (usually the emergency room) decides that a patient needs to be observed/monitored in the hospital for a short time, often to decide if they will need to be admitted

**Patient/Discharge Advocate:** A person who helps you in fixing any problems with your care and telling you about your health care choices

**Patient Safety:** A new health care discipline that stresses the importance of the reporting, analysis and prevention of medical error

**Preventative Care:** Care given before a person is sick

**Primary Care Provider (PCP):** PCPs can be doctors, nurse practitioners, or physician assistants who provide preventive care (can diagnose and treat common medical problems and may refer patients to other specialists if needed) <sup>2</sup>

**Readmission:** When a patient is re-admitted to the hospital (usually defined as within 30 days) of their original discharge date

**Specialist:** A health care provider who has extensive training and knowledge of a specific area

**Shared Decision Making:** "Shared decision making (SDM) is a process that allows patients and their providers to make health care decisions together, taking into account the best scientific evidence available, as well as the patient's values and preferences" <sup>3</sup>

For an extensive patient safety dictionary please visit <http://npsf.site-ym.com/?page=dictionaryae>

### REFERENCES

<sup>1</sup> United Hospital Fund. (2014). Hospital Admission: How to Plan and What to Expect During the Stay. Retrieved from Next Step in Care: [http://www.nextstepincare.org/uploads/File/Guides/Hospital/Admission/Hospital\\_Admissions.pdf](http://www.nextstepincare.org/uploads/File/Guides/Hospital/Admission/Hospital_Admissions.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> United Hospital Fund. (2013). Terms and Definitions. Retrieved from Next Step in Care: [http://www.nextstepincare.org/Terms\\_and\\_Definitions/](http://www.nextstepincare.org/Terms_and_Definitions/)

<sup>3</sup> Informed Medical Decisions Foundations. (n.d.). What is Shared Decision Making? Retrieved from <http://www.informedmedicaldecisions.org/what-is-shared-decision-making/>

