



## Tips for Supporting Your Loved One's Care in the Hospital



- Create a special Hospital Care Notebook or purchase *Safe & Sound in the Hospital: Must-Have Checklists and Tools for Your Loved One's Care*** ([www.SafeAndSoundBooks.com](http://www.SafeAndSoundBooks.com) or on Amazon.com.)
- Use this Notebook to take lots of notes and keep track of papers,** for example ...
  - CampaignZERO checklists
  - Names, contact information and roles of all care givers in the hospital
  - Drugs given to your loved one in the hospital
  - Tests ordered (type of test, for what?, by whom?, when given?, results expected? )
  - Test results, what they mean
  - Questions and concerns your loved one (and you) have for the nurses and doctors
  - Answers to these questions. (Don't be shy. It's OK to ask questions until everything is crystal clear.)
  - All papers the hospital gives you and your loved one
  - All discharge instructions and follow-up doctors' appointments
- Bring important papers** to the hospital:
  - **Medical Power of Attorney** and **Advanced Care Directives**
  - **A list of all the prescription drugs, drugstore medicines, vitamins and herbs** your loved one has taken in the past 3 months.  
*(Note: If your loved one has not completed these documents, you can help download them from free websites and perhaps, work with your loved one to fill them out.)*
- Plan to stay with your loved one 24/7 while in the hospital.** Find friends and family members to pitch in and cover times when you can't be there. Be sure to leave your Hospital Care Notebook in the room so they can get "up to speed" — and take notes themselves. Share all CampaignZERO checklists too.
- Encourage conversation between care givers and your loved one.** Help your loved one feel confident and motivated by learning "why?" from them. For example, after surgery, patients are asked to walk as soon as possible. When patients know *why* walking is so good for healing, they're more eager to do it. Look for explanations of health benefits for other difficult things your loved one may be asked to do.
- Get a nurse if an alarm goes off.**
- Get a nurse if anything about your loved one "just doesn't seem right." Trust your gut!**
  - If you ever feel no one is paying attention to your concerns, ask to speak to a nursing supervisor or the Chief Nursing Officer.
  - If you're still worried, you can also call the hospital operator and ask for a "Rapid Response Team."
- Ask care givers at every shift change to introduce themselves** to your loved one. Write their names down in plain view for your loved one – most rooms have white boards for this.
  - Ask nurses and doctors to go over their care notes at shift change in your loved one's room. **Speak up** if you hear any that are incorrect or if information is missing. Make sure your loved one's medical record is corrected.

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