

Mental Health Hospitalization: The Importance of Follow-Up Care

More than one in five people in the United States experience some form of mental illness, according to the [National Alliance on Mental Illness](#). It is more common than we think, and caring for yourself at the time of a mental health crisis is a sign of strength and empowerment. If you are struggling or worried about yourself, please treat it as you would a physical health condition and see a medical provider – in this case, one who specializes in mental health.

At times when a hospital stay is necessary, it's also important to follow through on next steps to recovery.

Why follow-up care is so important

If you have been in the hospital for a mental health struggle, be sure to schedule a follow-up visit with a mental health provider. Your appointment should be **within seven days after being discharged, if at all possible**. A follow-up visit is important because:

- Good follow-up care helps lower the risk of repeat trips to the hospital.
- You may need extra support right after leaving the hospital.
- If you're on medication, it allows your doctor to evaluate and adjust your medication.
- It helps ensure support for your transition back home and back to work or school.
- It allows you to keep building on the progress you made during your hospital stay.

Tips for your follow-up visit

Here are some ways to ensure that your follow-up care runs smoothly:

- Know your follow-up treatment, such as getting a list of what medications to take.
- Tell the hospital staff that you would like to visit a mental health provider within one week of being discharged. The hospital staff can help you find an in-network provider if you don't already have one. They can also help schedule the appointment – just be sure to ask.
- Ask the discharge staff at the hospital for detailed information about the follow-up visit, including:
 1. The provider's name.
 2. The provider's address.
 3. The provider's phone number, website or email address.
- Ask the discharge staff to send the records from your hospital stay to the mental health provider. This will help the provider know about your medical history before your appointment.

If you have coverage with Health Net's Managed Health Network (MHN), our behavioral health subsidiary, they can also help you schedule your follow-up visit. Just call the MHN Customer Service Department on your member ID card.

Establishing good follow-up care with your doctors can help improve your physical and mental health. It can also give you a sense of comfort knowing that you have a team of health care professionals who know your medical and mental history and who can support you on the path to recovery and well-being.

We're here to help

MHN has been helping our members live and work better for more than 35 years. If you should ever need our help, MHN is here 24/7 to get you the mental health treatment you need.

Call MHN anytime for:

- Questions about your benefits.
- Crisis or emergency help.
- MHN network provider suggestions based on your needs.
- Scheduling an appointment.
- Help with approvals, referrals and transition of care.

Call the MHN Customer Service Department on your member ID card, or visit www.mhn.com to learn more.