



Thanks to open communication, such as the bedside whiteboard (left) implemented with Path to Home, Alysha Shanks, LPN on Medicine Unit 53 at the Grey Nuns Community Hospital, can preplan her patients' days, including letting them know their anticipated date of discharge. This allows patients like Brenda Esplin to feel more in control of her care and her time in hospital.

# Path to Home

## is the road to patient and staff satisfaction

"I'm used to feeling like I'm in control of everything, but sometimes you come in here and feel like you're in control of nothing," says Brenda Esplin, a patient on Medicine Unit 53 at the Grey Nuns Community Hospital. She explains that she has been in and out of a couple hospitals in the last year, and during her latest stay she was able to experience a new pilot project, Path to Home, and finally feels like she's included in her care.

Path to Home is being implemented on test units at the Grey Nuns and Misericordia Community Hospitals and has been getting rave reviews from staff and patients like Brenda.

Improved communication is a focus. This includes talking to patients about their anticipated date of discharge, updating them daily on their care, listening to their concerns and ensuring they are prepared to go home after their hospital stay.

The inter-professional care team shares the anticipated date of discharge with the patient and their family, allowing them to plan for when they are leaving the hospital, arrange transportation and prepare for any needs the patient will have when they return home.

Alysha Shanks, an LPN on Medicine Unit 53, explains the improved communication, including rapid rounds, a team meeting each morning and afternoon to discuss each

patient's plan of care, has allowed her to better serve patients based on their individual needs. The rapid rounds let her know exactly why a patient is still in hospital, because it's communicated in a standardized way.

"Path to Home lets you assess the acuity of your patients. That way you know who you have to work with on things like mobility. If they're going home in the next couple of days, you want to promote their independence," says Alysha. She explains she now knows exactly when a patient is going for a test, and can plan her day around their schedule, making her more organized and efficient on the unit.

Another communications tool, bedside shift reports, help transfer accountability at each shift change. The outgoing and incoming bedside nurses, the patient and their family speak about their day. According to Brenda, this was especially appreciated.

"I'm impressed they always ask my permission to talk about me. They come in and ask if it's OK that they do the shift report now, and they do the report in front of me so I know exactly what's happening. I always know what they have for information about me because I have the same information."

A bedside whiteboard in each patient room records the inter-professional team member's names, information about the patient's plan of care, the anticipated date

of discharge and any notes the family would like to write to the patient.

The changes have better prepared staff and made Brenda more comfortable and in control of her future, "Even though I'll be in here for awhile, they've talked about when I go home already. I feel like I am prepared for that."

Path to Home will be expanding in Edmonton acute care in the coming year.



Brenda Esplin, patient on Medicine Unit 53 at the Grey Nuns Community Hospital, is comforted by the open communication she has experienced with Path to Home.