



# Improving Discharge Competency for Patients and Families in a Pediatric Oncology Unit

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## Introduction

Vulnerability of pediatric oncology patients heightens the risk of infections and disease related complications. Varied medication side effects, diagnoses, and central line care lead to the potentials for error after discharge without adequate instruction.

## PICO Question

**Population:** Discharge instruction for families of a pediatric hem/onc patient

**Intervention:** Create a standardized discharge checklist to improve comprehension

**Comparison:** Current method of printed instructions to improve comprehension

**Outcome:** Evaluate for adequate patient/parent comprehension of discharge instructions

**Question:** Which method of discharge will improve patient/parent understanding in this population?

## Methods

A literature search was conducted using the PubMed database.

**Keywords:** *discharge, pediatrics, hematology, oncology*

**Inclusion Criteria:** Articles within 5 years, inpatient hospitals, discharge education.

The initial search yielded 22 articles, 5 were included for this project.

## Results

Article	Methods	Results
Zavala, S & Shaffer, C (2011).	Fifty ED patients received follow-up phone calls post discharge	Thirty-one percent requested further information and 31% revealed poor comprehension of instructions.
Vashi, A & Rhodes, K (2011)	Secondary data analysis reviewed 477 audible ED discharge instructions via audio recordings	Twenty two percent of patients confirmed patient understanding of discharge instruction
Tresgallo, M.E, Richmond, L, Bluestein, J & Dubler, N (2008)	Analysis for ethical dilemmas of two individual pediatric cases at time of discharge	Proper use of instructional resources at time of discharge is imperative to protect the vulnerable pediatric population
Higby, C & Pye, K (2009)	Implemented new check list of discharge instruction on a pediatric oncology unit	Check list was found to be effective in improving patient/family understanding
Sehgal, N (2008)	Evaluation of pediatric and legal guardian satisfaction of discharge instructions	Patient involvement regarding method of discharge instruction is critical to improve comprehension

## References

Higby, C & Pye, K (2009). Improving Discharge from the Pediatric Oncology Unit.  
 Sehgal, N (2008). Engaging Patients at Hospital Discharge.  
 Tresgallo, M.E, Richmond, L, Bluestein, J & Dubler, N (2008). Ethical Delimmas in Pediatrics Discharge Planning.  
 Vashi, A & Rhodes, K (2011). "Sign Right Here and You're Good To Go": A Content Analysis of Audiotaped Emergency Department Discharge Instruction.  
 Zavala, S & Shaffer, C (2011). Do Patients understand discharge instructions?

## Discussion

Current discharge methods mentioned in the literature review illustrate poor patient comprehension of instructions. Thus, analyzing discharge methods highlighted in various literature reviews indicate the importance in developing a systematic guideline for discharge and including the necessity of patient involvement in the process.

## Conclusions

Discharge instruction within the pediatric oncology population requires involvement from all members of a patient's interdisciplinary team.

Developing a standardized checklist with and incorporating patient involvement can improve discharge understanding at time of discharge.