

B2 North Stroke Rehabilitation

B2 North is the stroke rehabilitation unit located in the Regional Rehabilitation Centre at Hamilton General Hospital. The stroke rehabilitation team will help you regain as much independence as possible and connect you with resources to help you as you transition out of the hospital on discharge. Your family and friends are encouraged to take part in the program and help you with your rehabilitation, also called “rehab”, goals.

Why rehabilitation?

Research shows that stroke survivors who take part in early, intensive, specialized stroke rehabilitation improve their ability to perform daily activities.

We understand...

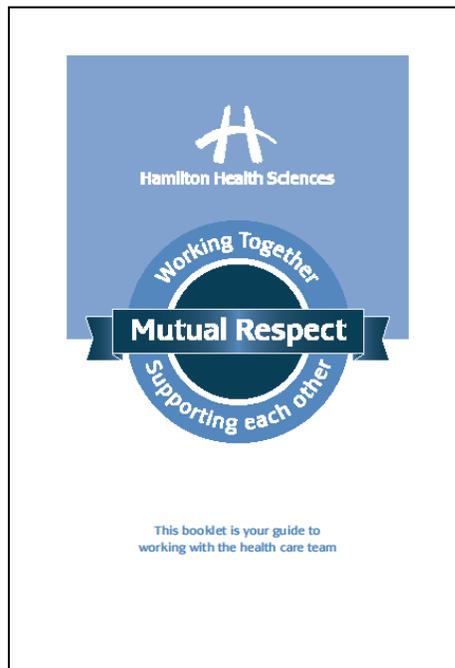
This may be a stressful and frustrating time for you. We recognize that your family or significant others are an important part of your care. Our goal is to provide care that meets the needs and goals of you and your family. This takes a lot of teamwork which is why we invite you and your family to take part as we work towards helping you to achieve your rehab goals.

The way we work together matters and the hospital should be a place where everyone is treated with respect. The health care team provides Patient and Family-Centred Care and follows a Code of Conduct based on values such as caring and respect. These values and their importance for effective teamwork are outlined in the booklet “Mutual Respect”. This is your guide to working with the health care team to make the most of your therapy.

We believe strongly in an environment where families, visitors and staff treat each other with respect. As part of the team, please share any feedback or concerns you might have. Together we can find a way to resolve them.

If you would like to obtain a copy of the “Mutual Respect” booklet, please ask a staff member.

If you have a question or concern about the Code of Conduct please feel free to discuss it with a staff member.



What can I expect in the first few days?

At the time of your admission, your rehabilitation team will do a detailed assessment of your current abilities and rehabilitation needs. They will create goals with you and discuss how you will work towards meeting these goals, together.

There will be a schedule for therapy (such as physiotherapy, occupational therapy and speech language therapy). It is important for you to follow that schedule to work towards your rehab goals with the therapy team. Visitors and non-medical appointments should not interfere with your therapy time. Your stay on B2 North is limited and patients say they are glad they made the most of their therapy time.

Family are an important part of your recovery process and they are encouraged to be an active participant in your therapy. By participating in therapy, they can learn strategies to advance your skills to support you as your recovery continues at home. Speak to your therapists about ways your family can help.

Your team will meet to discuss your progress and discharge plans every week. You will get a sheet of your active goals and other relevant updates after each weekly meeting.

Remember ... you and your family are the most important members of the team. We will ask you for your input before each of our meetings. You can voice concerns or ask questions to any team member, at any time.

Things to know about my recovery

Use it or lose it. It is important to do as much as you can yourself, while remaining safe. Speak to your care team about ways to do daily tasks. You may find it takes longer, or is more challenging than before, but your brain needs practice to improve your abilities.

Therapy time. Take part in your therapy as much as you can. Fatigue is common after stroke, so get rest when you need it. Try to pace yourself so you have enough energy for therapy time. This is an opportunity to make the most of your time here.

Practice. “The more, the better”. Ask your therapist about ways you can practice the skills you learned in therapy on your own time. Repetition is key. The more you practice the skills you learned in therapy, outside of therapy time, the greater recovery you will likely have. Pacing is also important. Do short bursts of practice and then take a rest. Over time, you’ll likely notice that you can be active for longer periods before you need a rest.

Creating new circuits. After a stroke, the brain will attempt to re-wire and make new brain circuits or connections, with activity and practice. This means you must pay careful attention to how you practice activities. When you repeat an activity over and over, that is what your brain will re-learn. Your therapist will instruct you on the correct techniques.

Remember that healing and recovery take time and will continue after your time in hospital is finished.

What do I bring to B2 North?

Each day you will get up and dress in your regular clothes.

Items to bring include:

- ✓ at least 2 outfits of loose fitting clothing, such as track pants, t-shirts and sweaters
- ✓ running shoes (velcro preferred) and socks
- ✓ personal items such as toothpaste, toothbrush, shampoo, comb or hairbrush, soap, shaving equipment or cosmetics
- ✓ special devices you may have used before your stroke, such as a walker or brace
- ✓ hearing aid, glasses and dentures (clearly labelled)

Please keep track of these items as they are small and easily misplaced.

- ✓ pictures of family and friends to make your room more comfortable.

You will be given a locker to keep your supplies in.
Please do not bring more items than will fit in your locker.

It is recommended that you do not bring valuables or irreplaceable items, jewellery or large amounts of cash.

Other information about B2 North

Meals

Breakfast is served in your room. All other meals are served in the patient dining room.

Laundry

There is equipment for you or your family to do your laundry on B2 North. You will need to bring your own detergent.

TV and telephones

A rental service allows patients to activate their television and telephone at their bedside. Please ask your nurse for details.

Equipment or devices

During your stay on B2 North, you may borrow equipment or devices such as a walker, wheelchair, hemi-arm sling, brace, and tools to help you eat or get dressed. These are ONLY for use on B2 North and stay on the unit when you are discharged. If you need equipment or devices when you are discharged, the health care team will tell you how to rent or purchase them.

What is your family's role in rehabilitation?

As an important member of the team, your family will be involved in activities such as care planning discussions, helping you practice activities and learning about healthy living. Many family members want to help but are not sure what to do. We will support your family members during this time so that they can:

- ✓ Know what to do and feel more knowledgeable, comfortable and confident about stroke recovery and how to troubleshoot challenges.
- ✓ Build trust with you.
- ✓ Have opportunities to improve your skills and ask questions.
- ✓ Learn the cues that signal when you need help.

It is important for your family to know when to visit. Visiting during certain times will help us work towards the items listed above and your goals. Writing down therapy times, times to practice and team meetings are great ways to help this.

In addition to practicing activities learned in therapy, a variety of activities will help the brain recover especially if you find them interesting. Your family member can encourage you to do:

- Problem solving – jig saw puzzles, word games.
- Concentration – card games, reading.
- Meaningful activities – take part in recreation activities that you like, visit with friends and family, go outside, play a musical instrument.

Boost your understanding of stroke and stroke rehabilitation. One way to increase your knowledge and confidence is to ask questions and read information. You may wish to talk to the health care team about:

- What caused the stroke?
- How to prevent another stroke?
- The medications you are on.
- Changes as a result of the stroke
- Specific things to do to be healthier and safe.
- The need for devices such as a cane, new glasses, arm or ankle support, communication boards or communication books.
- How your family member can help you practice, and what activities would be most helpful and safe?

There is information in the **Stroke Care Binder** about stroke and its risk factors.

There are additional information and resources on the Central South Regional Stroke Network Website:
www.csnstroke.ca

We understand there may be specific issues you may want to know more about. Please do not hesitate to ask your health care team. These may include questions regarding problems your family member may be having such as:

- getting around
- eating
- seeing
- thinking and remembering
- speaking and understanding
- personality changes
- strong emotions (frequent crying, feeling angry)
- depression or anxiety

Passes

As part of your therapy, the team may recommend that you practice your rehabilitation skills in your own home environment by temporarily leaving the hospital with family, also known as going on a pass. You may be eligible for one of these passes:

- **Day Pass** – a few hours away from the hospital on a Saturday or Sunday.
- **Overnight Pass** – one night away from the hospital. The pass usually starts on Saturday morning after 10:00 am. You return to B2 North by 8:00 pm Sunday night.
- **Weekend Pass** – 2 nights (or 3 nights for long weekends). The pass usually starts Friday after 4:00 pm and you return by 8:00 pm Sunday night.

Preparing for your Pass:

1. Arrange a time with the therapy staff for your family to receive car transfer training, walking training and/or stairs training.
2. If your family member is not able to do car transfers safely, your family member will need to arrange for a wheelchair taxi to get you home and back from your pass. Talk to the staff if you need help making these arrangements.

3. Talk to the nursing staff about when and how to take your medications at home.
4. Talk to the therapy staff about any equipment (urinals, wheelchair, or walker) you might need at home for safety during your pass.
5. Talk to the therapy staff about toileting and self-care.
6. Talk to the therapy staff about foods that are safe to eat.

Before you leave for a pass, you need to:

- Pick up your pass medications. Bring any unused medication back with you when you return to B2 North. For patients with communication difficulties, families need to tell the staff when the last dose of medication was taken at home.
- Sign out in the pass book before you leave and sign in when you return.
- Have a caregiver/family member stay with you during the pass.
- Call 911 if you have a medical crisis during the pass.
- Complete and return your pass questionnaire to your nurse.

We want you to be safe while you are on your pass.

Things TO DO on your pass:

- ✓ Take rest breaks when needed. Visiting with family and friends can be tiring.
- ✓ Take your medications at the times identified by the nursing staff.
- ✓ Use your walker or cane as instructed by the Physiotherapist.
- ✓ Take a sponge bath at home unless otherwise instructed by the Occupational Therapist.

Things NOT TO DO on your pass:

- ✗ Do not shower or take a bath at home unless the Occupational Therapist says it is safe to do so and you have the equipment at home for bathing safely.
- ✗ Do not walk at home unless the Physiotherapist has trained you to walk and says it is safe to do on your pass.
- ✗ Do not walk up and down the stairs unless the Physiotherapist has trained you to do this and says it is safe to do on your pass.
- ✗ Do not operate or drive any motor vehicles, including automobiles.
- ✗ Do not operate farm equipment or power tools.
- ✗ Do not drink alcohol or use recreational drugs.

Planning for your discharge

Discharge planning starts from the time you enter the program. At the time of your admission, the team completed a thorough assessment of your current abilities and needs. Your length of stay is individualized and will be determined by your therapy goals as well as provincial ministry guidelines. The team will discuss your progress and discharge plans every week.

Not everyone goes home following their rehab stay. Sometimes there are differences between what a person hopes to achieve, and what they are able to achieve in order to return home safely. Some people may go to long term care homes, retirement homes or other care environments.

Your social worker will help you with planning what you will need when you leave the program. The whole stroke team will help make your transition out of rehabilitation go as smoothly as possible.

After the program

Your recovery is not done when you leave the rehabilitation program. Before you are discharged from therapy, your health care team may give you exercises to do on your own or with family members or support persons. You will need to continue to practice these exercises and use the information you learned in the program. Your healthcare team may also connect you with community supports when you leave the hospital.

You will have a follow-up appointment with your stroke doctor after you are discharged from the program, for stroke care follow-up. Please also see your family doctor within 1 to 2 weeks of discharge from the program.