

STEP THREE: GETTING THE FACTS • A WORK SHEET

Since there is basic data to gather for each hospital you are considering, you may want to copy this two page assessment tool and fill one out for each hospital visited.

NAME OF HOSPITAL _____

LOCATION _____

WHEN YOU VISIT, ASK FOR...

- A copy of the hospital's Patient's Bill of Rights document
- A Patient Information Packet
- A written description of the hospital's services and fees
- An annual report or statement of organization
- A hospital report card on general performance issues or the results of hospital's latest patient satisfaction survey

HOSPITAL QUALITY ATTRIBUTES

- Accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Health Care Organizations (JCAHO)
- Percentage of physicians with privileges at the hospital (and/or staff physicians) who are Board Certified* _____
- Number of Registered Nurses to each patient overall _____
- Number of Nurse Specialists (master's degree) in hospital units _____
- Ratio of Licensed Practical Nurses to each patient overall _____

Ratio of graduate nurses and licensed practical nurses to each patient in specialty area: 1 nurse to 10 patients to 15 patients to 20 patients

- Participates in clinical trials
- Services and specialties provided by the hospital meet your specific health goals and potential medical needs
- Financial aid services available
 - Interest-free financing of co-payments/deductibles
- Assistance in filing insurance claims
 - Medicare and Supplemental Coverage Medicaid
- Social Services assistance in hospital as well as post-discharge follow up

*For other ways to ascertain board certifications for specialists see American Board of Medical Specialties in the FOR MORE INFORMATION section of this guide.

HOSPITAL TOUR CHECKPOINTS

- Hospital conveniently located
- Ample/Convenient parking
- Courtesy Van service available
- Hospital presents a clean appearance and pleasant air
- Lobby greeting warm, friendly, relaxed
- Comfortable waiting room

- Vending machines nearby
- Visitor phone in the waiting room
- Patient rooms inviting and cheery, conducive to recovery
- Patient rooms have comfortable chairs for visitors
- Privacy considered in the room design
- Television, internet, radio service
- Television, internet service at extra cost. Paid by day/week

DISCHARGE POLICY

- Discharge plan is developed for you before you leave the hospital
- Provides patient/caretaker with necessary training to continue care at home
- Includes training in changing dressings, taking medications
 using special medical devices
- Provides patient/family with written instructions on at-home care
- Provides written plan for return to health (normal activity)

ABOUT THE PHYSICIAN/SURGEON

- Physician/surgeon who will perform the procedure is Board Certified
 - has continued specialty education
- Particular procedure is performed frequently (annual basis) by physician
- Has success rate in a specific medical procedure you need
- Has responsibility for maintaining your personal care plan
 - during hospitalization during home recovery period

Now you are ready to make your decision using the rating chart provided in STEP FOUR.