



Transitions of Care: RE-IGNITE THE WARM HANDOFF TO REDUCE READMISSIONS

Utilize a person-centered “warm handoff” during every transition of care to reduce miscommunication and omissions that can result in medical errors and adverse events.



Key Information to Include for In-Person or Virtual Warm Handoffs:

- Medication lists and last doses given
- Immunizations given and immunizations still due
- Goals of care and advance directives
- Alliant Zone Tools
- Readmission risks
- To-do action list: appointments, tests, labs
- Any special instructions

Best Practice Example:

Review Maury Regional Health System’s [Virtual Warm Handoff Training](#) on using a virtual warm handoff during transitions to another level of care.

The training covers:

- The “why” and the benefits of using a virtual warm handoff
- Process steps for conducting virtual warm handoffs
- Tips for videoconferencing
- Maintaining telemedicine equipment
- A [short video demonstration](#) of a hospital to skilled nursing facility virtual warm handoff

Tips:

1. Consider the health literacy of each patient and care partner participating in the handoff.
2. Consider using technology such as tablets to engage care partners who cannot be physically present, provide a virtual introduction to the next level of care, and promote accountability between the receiving and transferring nurse.
3. Use a standard report form. Where appropriate, include scripted elements.
4. Provide instructions for using patient portals to access future appointments, test results and discharge instructions.
5. Include sending and receiving clinicians and patient care partners in the warm handoff conversation. Also, consider including a social worker or discharge planner who can provide follow-up questions and support.

Additional Resources

[Joint Commission: 8 Tips for High-Quality Hand-Off Graphic](#)

[AHRQ Handoff Pocket Guide](#)

[Patient- and Family-Centered Care Organizational Self-Assessment Tool](#)

[Alliant Zone Tools](#)

For coaching and mentoring support in re-igniting or starting your warm handoff initiative, contact Melody.Brown@AlliantHealth.org.