

Occupational Therapy — Discharge to GP after Total Hip Replacement

THE CASE NOTES

Patient: Mrs Kathleen Doyle, 74 years old; right total hip replacement (posterior approach) yesterday; discharged home today with support from her husband

Hip precautions (12 weeks): Do not bend the right hip beyond 90 degrees; do not cross legs; do not twist or rotate the right hip inward; these precautions prevent posterior dislocation

ADL status: Independent in: walking with a frame (short distances), bed transfers with rail; Assistance required: dressing lower body (hip precautions prevent bending to put on socks/shoes); showering (showering stool provided)

Equipment provided: Walking frame; raised toilet seat (7 cm); showering stool; long-handled shoe horn and sock aid; bed rail

Follow-up: Physiotherapy outpatient booked at 4 weeks; hip precautions review with surgeon at 12 weeks

Task: Write a discharge letter to the GP, Dr Michael Burke, outlining the hip precautions, ADL status, and equipment provided.

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WHAT TO INCLUDE

- + **The three hip precautions (no hip flexion beyond 90°, no leg crossing, no inward rotation) and their purpose**
Posterior dislocation of a new hip replacement is a serious complication. The GP must know the precautions to support the patient's compliance and to recognise if the patient is at risk.
- + **Equipment provided: walking frame, raised toilet seat, showering stool, sock aid**
The GP needs to know what the patient has at home so they can assess compliance and identify gaps at the post-op review.
- + **That dressing lower body requires assistance and the husband is providing support**
The patient is not fully independent — the GP needs to know the carer situation in case the husband is unavailable.

WHAT TO LEAVE OUT

- **The surgical approach (posterior) in detail**
'Right total hip replacement (posterior approach)' is one clause of context — it explains why the hip precautions are those specific movements. No further surgical detail is needed.
- **The physiotherapy follow-up detail**
State it in one sentence: 'Physiotherapy outpatient booked at 4 weeks.' The GP does not manage the physiotherapy schedule.

CRITERION IN FOCUS - CONTENT

A hip replacement OT discharge letter has three non-negotiable Content requirements: (1) the precautions stated precisely (the three specific movements, not just 'hip precautions apply'), (2) the current ADL independence level, (3) the equipment in place. Omitting the specific movement restrictions, stating 'equipment was issued' without listing it, or omitting whether the patient has carer support are all Content gaps.

OET Case Notes

Occupational Therapy · Beginner · Discharge letter · to General Practitioner

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