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The Hospitalist Program at The William W. Backus Hospital

What to expect if your
primary care doctor
refers you to a hospitalist.



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We understand that there may be some fears in being hospitalized and not surrounded by familiar faces.

The hospitalists and the entire hospital staff will work hard to ensure you are well informed as we care for you. This brochure is designed to introduce you to the doctors in the hospitalist program and what to expect throughout your stay.

What kind of a doctor is a hospitalist?

A hospitalist is a doctor who specializes in the care of patients who are in the hospital. Our hospitalists are trained in either Internal Medicine or Family Medicine. Some of the hospitalists have additional specialty training in pulmonary, cardiology and geriatrics. Hospitalists focus on caring for health conditions that are usually treated in a hospital. Our hospitalists don't have a practice outside the hospital but maintain offices on our hospital grounds.

Why is a hospitalist caring for me?

Your own primary care physician has requested that a hospitalist be in charge of your care during the hospital stay. In this way you have the benefit of being seen by a doctor whose practice is entirely focused on the care of hospital patients. Additionally this can enable your primary care physician to be more available to you in the office.

What should I expect if my primary care doctor refers me to a hospitalist?

If your primary care doctor refers you to a hospitalist:

- He or she will share your records and information so the hospitalist will know about your current health condition and medical history.
- The hospitalist will examine you and coordinate all exams, tests and treatments while you are in the hospital.

What if I need another specialist while in the hospital?

Consultations from other physicians are necessary in some cases and the hospitalists can arrange for these when needed. If you have already been seeing other doctors at Backus or elsewhere, be sure to let us know so that we can keep them informed about your hospital stay.

How will the hospitalist learn about me and my health conditions?

A hospitalist relies on discussions with you (and your family members, when appropriate) to learn your medical history, what symptoms brought you to the hospital and which medications you are taking. The hospitalist also gets valuable information from your primary care physician and your medical records.

Will information regarding my treatment in the hospital be shared with my primary care physicians for continuity?

Yes. Records regarding care and treatment while hospitalized will be shared with you and your primary care doctor.

What if I don't have a regular primary care physician?

The Backus hospitalists and other staff at the hospital can assist in finding a doctor for you to see after leaving the hospital. Records from your hospital stay will be sent to this physician.



What will happen when I am discharged?

When you leave the hospital, the hospitalist will:

- Send your doctors a dictated summary of your hospital course.
- Let your doctors know about your hospital course and planned follow up.
- Prescribe the medicines you need to take when you leave the hospital. Your primary care doctor will take care of refills.

After you leave the hospital:

Since the hospitalists do not have an outpatient practice, you will not have an appointment to see the hospitalist again after discharge. You may contact the hospitalist after discharge if you have a question about the hospital stay.

- **Please call your primary care physician for a follow up appointment. Please bring along any discharge paperwork given to you for your physician to review and make copies.**
- If you did not have a primary care physician before coming into the hospital, we will refer you to a physician's office where you should establish primary care. You are responsible for making the follow up appointments.
- If there are questions that arise after you leave the hospital, you can call the main hospital number (860) 889-8331 and the operator can connect you to a hospitalist; or call the Hospitalist Program Coordinator, Sharon Burdick, at 860-885-6420.