OSCE checklist for patient discharge

An OSCE checklist for patient discharge covers confirming the patient is ready and the discharge is agreed, checking and explaining medicines, teaching home care and warning signs, arranging follow-up and transport, returning belongings and completing the records.

OSCE checklist for patient discharge: steps to practise

1. Confirm the discharge decision with the team, that the discharge summary is done and that the patient's latest observations are stable. Report any concern to the nurse in charge before the patient leaves.
2. Clean your hands, introduce yourself, confirm the patient's name and date of birth against the wristband and the discharge papers, and explain that they are going home.
3. Check the discharge medicines against the discharge prescription with a registered nurse, including allergies. Explain what each is for, how and when to take it, common side effects and any changes from before admission.
4. Teach about diet, activity, wound care, devices and any restrictions, and check understanding with teach-back.
5. Explain the warning signs to look out for and who to contact, including NHS 111, their GP and 999 in an emergency, or the local equivalents.
6. Give the date, time and place of follow-up and any tests, and confirm that the discharge letter will go to the GP and any community services.
7. Check transport, a responsible adult if needed, care at home and any equipment needed at home.
8. Return the patient's own medicines, belongings and valuables against the list, and have the patient sign as your policy says.
9. If a cannula is in place, remove it with clean hands and gloves, apply pressure, check it is intact and dispose of it in the sharps bin. Remove the wristband as your policy says.
10. Clean your hands. Complete the discharge record, including time and who the patient left with, and update the bed list.

What candidates commonly forget

- Not checking the patient is fit to leave and observations are stable
- Not checking discharge medicines against the prescription
- Not checking understanding with teach-back
- Not explaining warning signs and who to call
- Not checking the cannula is intact after removal
- Not returning belongings or updating the records

Local policy comes first

This is our own practice checklist. Your college, hospital or country may do some steps differently. Where local policy and this list disagree, follow local policy.

Practise the hands-on steps with a classmate or in a skills lab, because an AI patient cannot watch your technique. You can practise the talking part with an AI patient, and try one station free with no sign-up. Next, try A home discharge plan with limited reading confidence. Back to the nursing foundation OSCE page: nursing foundation OSCE, or see the full OSCE checklist list.

Common questions

What is the OSCE checklist for patient discharge?

Confirm the discharge is agreed and the patient is stable, check identity, check and explain medicines, teach home care and warning signs, give follow-up details, check transport and support at home, return belongings, remove the cannula safely and complete the records.

What is teach-back?

Asking the patient to say in their own words what they will do, so you can check they understood.

What if the family cannot collect the patient?

Tell the nurse in charge so the team can arrange transport or a safe plan.

Sources

- NMC: standards of proficiency for registered nurses
- NMC: The Code

Checked 2026-11-13. Fees and rules change, so confirm them with the regulator before you book.