



Recommendations for NICU Discharge Summary



Discharge Summary Elements

- Infant's name in the hospital (and after discharge, if different)
- Admission indication, birthweight, head circumference, length and gestational age
- Maternal history including prenatal labs
- Discharge diagnoses
- Hospital course written by systems
- Physical exam at discharge including head circumference, length and weight percentiles
- Discharge physical exam findings (highlight any abnormal findings)
- Discharge medications and administration instructions
- Home feeding plan (breast milk fortification, formula type, recommended nipple, frequency and volume)
- Newborn hearing screen results and any follow up screening needed
- Newborn screening dates and abnormal results
- Car seat challenge results
- Immunizations administered and immunizations recommended that were not given
- Pending lab or test results that need follow up
- Prognosis (if guarded)
- If indicated, medical equipment needs
- Any known pertinent social, family, or medical history
- Community service referrals made or recommended and any counseling opportunities available to the family
- Any tasks to be completed (follow-up appointments or tests not yet scheduled)
- Interpreter or communication needs
- Any referrals to resources for specific diagnoses
- Community resources (counseling, mental health, substance dependency, visiting nurses, financial resources, etc.)

General Recommendations

- Discharge summary should be formatted from a structured template with section headings
- Discharge summary should be translated into the family's preferred language when possible
- Families should be provided with copies of the discharge summary and directions on how to get an official copy of the medical record, if interested
- Provide at least two copies of the discharge summary (one for the medical home and one for the family to share with home visiting or emergency services)
- Provide specialists with copies of the discharge summary directly or provide the family with copies to give to specialists