

The Longest Hour - Patient Discharge

By: Dave Geenens, President/CEO Avascend Healthcare Hospitality

Experiencing a slow and insensitive discharge from a hospital is often the one thing a patient or guest remembers about his or her hospital stay. The last hour before going home will determine, to a great degree how the patient and family assess and share their overall care and experience.

Avascend is redefining patient discharge. /discharge/

1. to relieve of a charge or load; to remove or send forth, to send away or allow to go
2. to extend a prompt, helpful, and warm hand as a patient begins his or her journey home by anticipating his or her needs, offering some take-home amenities, requesting a bell staff person and cart for transporting accumulated personal items, requesting the valet service to retrieve his or her vehicle, and to insure the patient has a safe, comfortable and caring escort to his or her vehicle for departure

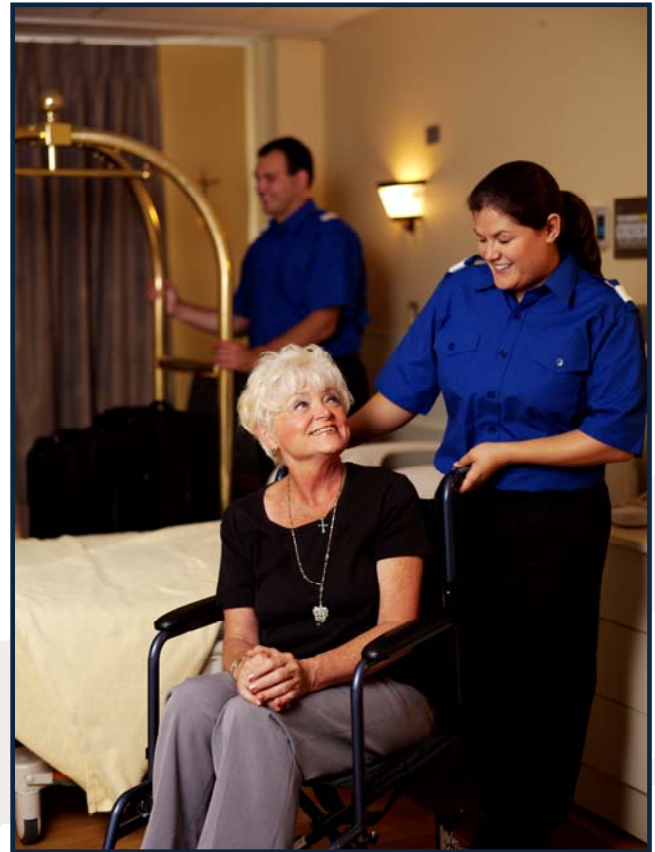
Introducing Avascend's Envoy Service

Avascend's Envoy Service is offered specifically to insure that a patient has the best possible departure experience from your hospital. Not only will Avascend's Hospitality Specialists insure a wonderful patient/guest experience, but our company will commit to improving patient flow, increasing bed turnover and readiness, and improving IPT and nurse clinical utilization.

The duty of discharging a patient can be a time-consuming and unnecessary distraction from more urgent clinical care issues on a floor. Often, nurses and transporters can experience delays of more than an hour if the logistics of gathering up belongings and arranging for transportation are not complete. These long wait times take nurses and transporters away from the important clinical, diagnostic, and treatment services at the hospital. This poor utilization of

critical patient care and patient flow resources can result in lower quality care, lower billings, and higher costs.

Avascend's Envoy Service is a comprehensive, multi-faceted service leveraging a blend of 'front door' greeting, way-finding, wheelchair escort, and bell staff services; all launched through either existing hospital transport software or through a new discharge-to-valet integrated software system.



Imagine the patient/guest experience looking something like this:

The nurse unit assistant is informed of the doctor's order for discharge. The assistant either enters or calls the request into the Envoy Supervisor. An envoy, dressed impeccably in both slacks and a blazer or in a more comfortable camp shirt and slacks, is immediately paged and

dispatched to the floor to debrief with the nurse unit assistant and staff nurse.

Also, the Envoys, when not attending to a patient who's ready for discharge, serve as personal greeters and way-finders at the entrance of your hospital. This insures great utilization of your Avascend Envoys.

Upon entering the patient's room, our Envoys greet them with a warm smile and an encouraging word. The Envoy will observe the surroundings for the immediate needs of the patient. The need may arise from weather changes outside, a missing or forgotten article of clothing, or items pertinent to their hospital stay that they'll want to have at home. In addition, our people will inventory and make available a wide range of amenities that can benefit a patient as they prepare to leave your hospital. If it appears that a patient and/or guest has sufficient personal belongings to warrant assistance, they will immediately contact the Envoy Supervisor for a bell cart to transport belongings.

The Envoy will inquire of the patient and/or guest if he or she used the valet service. If so, the Envoy will call down or enter the ticket number into the discharge-to-valet system to request the vehicle be retrieved. This will insure little or no wait at the hospital entrance/exit.

Also, the Envoy will insure the patient has everything he or she needs by going through a memorized check list of things that patients often overlook or forget. If the patient expresses any concerns about what they need to do once at home, the Envoy will alert the nursing staff and insure any questions are answered before the person leaves the room.

Once the patient is ready to go and his or her belongings are gathered, the Envoy will initiate a housekeeping request for EVS. This will insure the prompt and effective turnover of the room for the next patient.

The Envoy will escort the patient and/or guests warmly and carefully to the hospital entrance/exit, where a valet will have the vehicle

waiting. The valet and Envoy will help load the vehicle and insure the patient is safely inside the vehicle before warmly offering them best wishes and inviting them back for their future healthcare needs.

There are many important 'touch points' during a patient's discharge that can affect one's experience at the hospital. Avascend's Envoy Service, staffed with our talented Hospitality Specialists, can make a lasting and significant impression on your patients and guests. Additionally, you can see how leveraging the Envoy team to supplement EVS, transportation or the nurses' clinical activities can bring improved utilization of valuable clinical resources. This results in improved room turnover, increase returns on mission-critical diagnostic equipment and treatment equipment investments.

You will be surprised at how affordable this service is, especially when you are able to better utilize your nursing and transport staffs. You can learn more about Avascend and its wide array of healthcare hospitality services at www.avascend.com.