

Home Care Room Setup Checklist

For families bringing a bedridden parent home

From SeniorSafetyAdvice.com | Esther C. Kane, CAPS, C.D.S., OT (Ret.)

Use this checklist before your parent arrives home — and again during the first week to catch anything you missed. Not every item will apply to every situation. Work through it with your parent's medical team if you are unsure.

1. Choosing the Right Room

- Ground floor room selected (avoids stairs in emergencies)
- Room is close to a bathroom or has space for a bedside commode
- Doorways are at least 32 inches wide (measure before equipment is delivered)
- Enough floor space to access both sides of the bed comfortably
- Room has a window with natural light
- Room noise level is manageable (away from loud TV, street traffic)
- Flooring is clear of rugs, cords, or tripping hazards

2. The Bed

- Full electric adjustable hospital bed ordered or rented
Ask the hospital discharge planner about Medicare Part B coverage before you leave.
- Bed can raise and lower in height for caregiver access
- Head and foot sections are independently adjustable
- Bed height can be lowered close to floor when patient is resting
- Pressure-redistributing mattress overlay in place from Day 1
Look for an alternating pressure air mattress or high-density foam overlay — not a basic foam pad.
- Bed positioned so both sides are accessible
- Padded half-rails or foam bolsters in place if roll-out risk is present
Avoid full-length metal rails on standard mattresses — entrapment risk.

3. Skin Protection Protocol

- Repositioning schedule established (minimum every 2 hours while awake)
- Foam positioning wedges or folded blankets available for side-lying support
- Heel protectors or foam heel boots in place
- Turning log posted at bedside (whiteboard, sticky note, or printed chart)

- Caregiver knows how to perform a skin check at each repositioning
Look for persistent redness that does not fade when pressure is released — this is a Stage 1 pressure injury.
- Barrier cream available for incontinence-related skin protection

4. Within-Reach Zone (Patient's Arm's Reach)

- Overbed rolling table in place and height-adjusted
- Call bell, baby monitor, or other alert system within easy reach
- Water with straw (insulated tumbler preferred) within reach at all times
- Phone or tablet accessible without stretching or leaning
- TV remote within reach
- Bedside lamp with accessible switch or plug-in remote switch
- Medications (if appropriate to store at bedside) accessible

5. Caregiver Setup and Body Mechanics

- Bed height adjusted to caregiver's hip level for caregiving tasks
Hip-height working position protects the caregiver's spine during repositioning and personal care.
- Bedside commode in place (positioned on patient's stronger side if applicable)
- Supply cart or dresser stocked and positioned next to the bed
- Supplies organized so caregiver does not need to leave the room mid-care
- Baby monitor or bed alarm charged and in place for nighttime monitoring
- Spare bed linens stored within easy reach for middle-of-the-night changes

6. Safety and Monitoring

- Bed alarm sensor pad in place under the fitted sheet
- Baby monitor or intercom system set up between patient's room and caregiver's
- Medical alert device or call button available to the patient
- Emergency contact list written and posted visibly in the room
- Medication list current and accessible to any visiting caregiver or responder
- Smoke and CO detector functional near the room
- Clear path to room exit identified for emergency evacuation

7. Environment and Emotional Wellbeing

- Warm-toned lighting in place (not harsh overhead fluorescents)
- Room temperature comfortable and consistent (thermometer in room)

- Fan available for air circulation if needed
- Familiar personal items in view (photos, meaningful objects)
- Calendar and clock visible from the bed
- Bed positioned with a view of window or TV without neck strain
- Plan in place for regular conversation visits (not just caregiving visits)

8. Professional Support

- Discharge instructions reviewed and questions answered before leaving hospital
- Home health nurse or aide visits scheduled if ordered
- Occupational therapy home visit requested or scheduled
An OT home assessment before or within the first week can catch hazards families miss.
- Physical therapy visits scheduled if applicable
- Primary care follow-up appointment booked
- Caregiver support resources identified (respite care, local support groups)

This checklist is a companion resource to the article "How to Set Up a Home Care Room for a Bedridden Parent" at SeniorSafetyAdvice.com.
 It is intended for informational purposes only and does not replace guidance from your parent's medical team.
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