



TOOLKIT 13 · DISCHARGE & TEACH-BACK · TOOL 2 OF 5

Teach-Back — Ask, Explain, Check

The method that finds out whether the patient understood, without making them feel tested. The phrases, on a card

TEACH-BACK

- 1 · **Explain** one thing at a time, plain words, no more than three points.
- 2 · **Ask — putting it on yourself** "I want to be sure I explained this well. Can you tell me in your own words how you will take this medicine?" · "When you get home, what will you tell your family about what we discussed?" · "Show me how you will use the inhaler."
- 3 · **Listen** If they can teach it back: done — document it. If not: "I must not have explained that clearly. Let me try another way." Re-explain differently — a picture, a demonstration, a written list — and ask again.
- 4 · **Never** "Do you understand?" · "Any questions?" — They always say yes and no.

Document: "Teach-back: [topic] — understood / re-taught × __ — with [family member]".

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Use it for

Every new medicine · every discharge · every consent · every device (inhaler, insulin pen, dressing) · every warning-sign conversation. Ten seconds when it works; the one time in five it doesn't is the readmission you prevented.

Adapted from the AHRQ Health Literacy Universal Precautions Toolkit, Tool 5: Use the Teach-Back Method.

ASF standards: Standard 6 — discharge information; Standard 2 — patient information; Standard 4 — informed consent