

From hospital bed to home comfort: A new era in acute care delivery



Within recent years, overcrowding has become a globally widespread problem, negatively impacting hospitals and patients. Though the factors that contribute to overcrowding are complex, fundamental causes include increased patient volume, high staff workload, delays in patient processing, and lack of access to primary care and available beds. According to a [2022 narrative review](#) of existing literature on the topic, this leads to emergency department overload, increased patient mortality and morbidity, and decreased ability to provide necessary care to patients in a timely manner.

Furthermore, in a [2024 press release](#) David F.M. Brown, MD, President of Mass General Hospital, describes how the COVID-19 pandemic caused severe overcrowding at one of Mass General Brigham's largest hospitals.

“COVID-19 and the post-pandemic demand for care escalated this challenge into a full-blown crisis – for patients seeking necessary emergency care, as well as for staff who are required to work under these increasingly stressful conditions,” Brown said.

Easing overcrowding with Home Hospital

To help manage overcrowding, Mass General Brigham, launched Home Hospital in 2017—bringing hospital-level care to eligible patients at home.

Home Hospital, which is voluntary in nature, is available to adult patients with an eligible diagnosis within the hospital's geographic service area. **Eligible diagnoses include infections and pulmonary, cardiac, gastrointestinal, renal, hepatic, and surgical conditions.**

A Home Hospital stay typically lasts between 5-6 days, though the amount of time spent in the program varies based on a patient's condition and medical needs.* Like with a

traditional hospital stay, patients are treated by Mass General Brigham doctors, nurses, nurse practitioners, and physician assistants.

Patients receive remote vital signs monitoring and can access staff 24/7. Patients participating in the program are seen in-person at least twice daily in addition to their virtual visits with doctors and other caregivers.

Mass General Brigham Health Plan plays a vital role in the Home Hospital program by providing education and awareness to eligible members and supporting care transitions for members who leave the program to ensure successful recoveries.

In their own words

“The care my husband received through Mass General Brigham's Home Hospital program was exceptional. It provided the right level of care without the disruption that often comes with a hospital stay. I've shared our experience with anyone who will listen—it truly transformed what could have been a stressful time into one of comfort, confidence, and convenience for our whole family.”

Michelle Markowitz
Caregiver and spouse of a Home Hospital patient



Hear directly from George, a Home Hospital patient, about the top-notch care he received during his stay. Scan the QR code or [Mass General Brigham website.](#)

Home Hospital services include:



Daily in-person and virtual visits



24/7 connection by phone and video



Remote vital signs monitoring



Oral and intravenous (IV) medications



Diagnostic testing, including portable X-rays, ultrasounds, and bloodwork



Oxygen



Home health aide



Specialty consultation (e.g., cardiology, infectious disease, rheumatology)



Physical, occupational, and speech-language therapy



Social work



Food services

92 Home Hospital net promoter score**

Better outcomes, happier patients

Home Hospital has proven to be an effective solution for combating emergency department overcrowding.

On average, Home Hospital patients:

- » Have a shorter length of stay
- » Need less physical therapy
- » Use less skilled nursing rehabilitation
- » Report greater satisfaction
- » Have an easier transition to life after discharge
- » Have better clinical outcomes*

A [2020 randomized controlled trial](#) confirmed these findings. Over the course of the trial, 91 adults—43 home and 48 control—with selected acute conditions were admitted via the emergency department. The resulting study found that home patients were associated with reduced cost, healthcare use, and readmissions, accompanied by an improved experience.

Additionally, a [2024 federal report to Congress](#) on the Acute Hospital Care at Home initiative demonstrated that home-based acute care is associated with lower mortality rates and reduced post-discharge costs compared to traditional inpatient care—outcomes that also align with Mass General Brigham Health Plan's focus on delivering high-value care for its members.

This sentiment is echoed by [Frank](#), a Mass General Brigham Home Hospital patient who was admitted to the program after undergoing surgery.

“I was much happier being at home than I would have been at the hospital,” he said. “It felt like I was getting one-on-one care.”

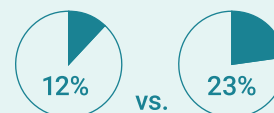
As evidenced by studies, data, and testimonials from home patients, Home Hospital serves as a great way for emergency departments to combat overcrowding and improve the patient experience.

The randomized controlled trial found that home patients:

Required fewer lab orders



Spent a smaller portion of the day sedentary



Were readmitted less frequently within 30 days



* [Mass General Brigham Hospitals, Services & Specialties: Home Hospital](#)

** Net promoter score (NPS) measures customer loyalty on a scale of -100 to 100 by asking how likely they are to recommend a company, then subtracting detractors from promoters.

