

Home health care improves COVID-19 outcomes

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Survivors of COVID-19 are a vulnerable population who often have health ramifications from their illness and hospital stay. Upon returning home from acute care, large proportions of survivors experience functional dependencies, pain, dyspnea, and exhaustion. Until now, no data has been available on the outcomes of COVID-19 patients discharged home after hospitalization and their recovery needs.

In a new study from the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing (Penn Nursing), rich data from more than 1,400 COVID-19 patients admitted to home health care after hospital discharge describes home visit care and recovery extent. In the study, 94 percent of the patients discharged to home health care, which included skilled nursing and [physical therapy](#), achieved statistically significant improvements in symptom burden and functional outcomes and 87 percent had no adverse events. The study indicates that increasing referrals to home health care has the potential to provide support and achieve improved recovery for these patients.

"Our findings suggest that [acute care](#) providers might carefully consider which COVID-19 survivors would benefit from home health care after hospitalization," writes Kathryn H. Bowles, Ph.D., RN, FAAN, FACMI, Professor of Nursing and van Ameringen Chair in Nursing Excellence at Penn Nursing. "A decision support tool to identify general hospitalized patients for [home health care](#) referral may be helpful." Bowles was the lead investigator of the study.

More information: Kathryn H. Bowles et al, Surviving COVID-19 After Hospital Discharge: Symptom, Functional, and Adverse Outcomes of Home Health Recipients, *Annals of Internal Medicine* (2020). [DOI: 10.7326/M20-5206](https://doi.org/10.7326/M20-5206)

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