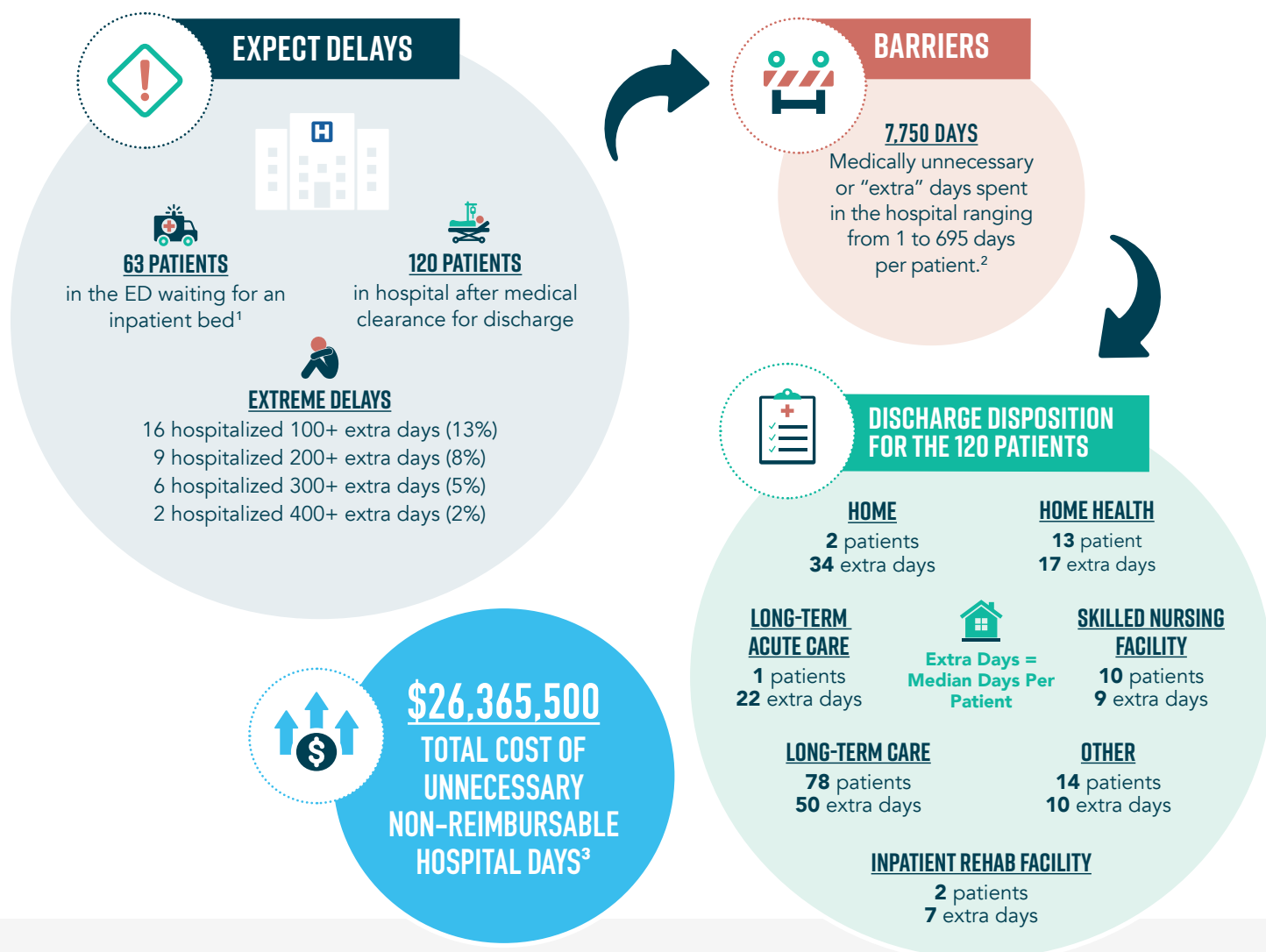


Discharge Barriers Strand Hospitalized Patients and Gridlock New Hampshire's Health Care System

Every day, across New Hampshire, patients medically cleared for discharge remain in the hospital due to significant barriers. As a result, widespread gridlock triggers a domino effect, forcing emergency room patients to wait hours or days for an open bed. This report provides a critical single-day snapshot from the week of August 31, 2026, exposing the systemic barriers that leave patients stranded and compromise health care capacity statewide.



26 NH ACUTE CARE HOSPITALS REPORTING: Data was sourced from the Foundation for Healthy Communities' monthly barriers to discharge survey. 1) Source: Juvare. Represents average daily non-behavioral health ED holds among the participating hospitals 2) Represents the current, cumulative "extra" days of the 120 patients included in this report 3) KFF. (2025). Hospital expenses per adjusted inpatient day. KFF State Health Facts. <https://www.kff.org/health-costs/state-indicator/expenses-per-inpatient-day/>

Barriers to Hospital Discharge & Additional Length of Stay



This chart shows the most common reported barriers and the number of additional hospital days associated with each barrier.

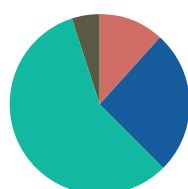
Patients may experience multiple barriers to discharge.

BARRIER	BARRIER TO DISCHARGE	PATIENTS	MEDIAN "EXTRA" DAYS IN THE HOSPITAL
Housing Concerns	Home modification needed	1	82
	Homeless	13	48
Insurance	Denial of request for authorization from insurer	3	3
	Insurer does not provide post-acute coverage	4	55
	Other	16	43
	Waiting on Medicaid determination	48	56
	Waiting on response from insurance	5	22
Need for Specialized Services	Bariatric	4	52
	Brain injury	4	194
	Dementia care	38	63
	Specialized BH services	8	32
	Specialized SUD services	1	10
Other	Family/caregiver unwilling/unable	31	45
	Lack of access to necessary community services	17	54
	Lack of guardianship/conservatorship/health care proxy	43	65
	Staffing/capacity constraints at post-acute care facility	12	43

Demographics

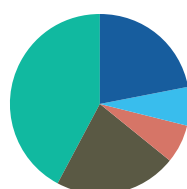


Characteristics of the 120 patients waiting for disposition



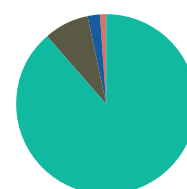
AGE GROUP

<44 {12%}
 45-64 {26%}
 65-89 {58%}
 90+ {5%}



PRIMARY INSURANCE

MEDICAID {22%}
 UNINSURED {7%}
 COMMERCIAL {7%}
 MEDICARE ADV. {22%}
 MEDICARE {42%}



PRIMARY RESIDENCY

NEW HAMPSHIRE {86%}
 VERMONT {8%}
 MAINE {2%}
 OTHER {1%}

Patients deserve timely, appropriate care throughout their hospitalization—including a safe and efficient discharge.

Removing barriers to discharge is essential to ensuring patients can transition to the right level of post-acute care while freeing hospital beds for patients who need them. Health care leaders and policymakers across the continuum must collaborate to strengthen discharge pathways and reduce preventable delays.