Baylor Institute for Rehabilitation

Helping people overcome serious disabilities and restoring them to full, productive lives is the goal of the clinical staff at the 92-bed, not-for-profit Baylor Institute for Rehabilitation. Baylor Rehab offers intense, highly specialized rehabilitation services for traumatic brain injuries, spinal cord injuries, strokes, and other orthopaedic and neurological disorders. Physicians specializing in physical medicine and rehabilitation, known as physiatrists, lead interdisciplinary clinical teams, which work with patients to design and implement a treatment program to achieve the patient’s goals. In 2010, for the 14th year, Baylor Rehab was named among the top rehabilitation hospitals in U.S. News & World Report’s “America’s Best Hospitals” guide.

HIGHLIGHTS

Traumatic Brain Injury Research

Baylor Rehab has a prestigious reputation for its Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) program, one of only 14 facilities throughout the nation to be designated as a model system of care for the treatment of patients with TBI by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research. The TBI Model System (TBIMS) project is a prospective, longitudinal multi-center study examining the course of recovery and outcomes following TBI. Baylor Rehab’s model system, known as the North Texas Traumatic Brain Injury Model System (NTTBIIMS), is a cooperative effort between the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center and Baylor Rehab. Researchers hope to learn more about TBI and the vast array of issues encountered by those people affected by it. The goal of the research is to help improve outcomes and the quality of life for people who have had brain injuries, as well as for their families.

Spinal Cord Injury Team Studying Importance of Patients’ Resilience After Injury

When a person experiences a spinal cord injury (SCI), their life is dramatically changed and they are faced with a new set of physical, social and especially emotional challenges. How an individual reacts and adapts to a traumatic event such as this is known as resilience—their ability to overcome adversity. Researchers at Baylor Rehab, in conjunction with the University of North Texas, are currently examining the role of resilience in SCI patients’ rehabilitation process. Through this research, psychologists at Baylor Rehab hope to answer the question: “Why after exposure to a traumatic event, do some people adapt more successfully than others?” Results from this study may assist Baylor Rehab psychologists in predicting the ability of patients to tolerate stress and negative affect post injury and could also lead to the identification of patients who would benefit from resilience therapy early on in the rehabilitation process.

PRISMS (Project To Improve Symptoms and Mood After SCI)

Major depression has long been a battle for persons who have experienced a spinal cord injury. We are currently enrolling patients in a first-ever study of its kind, a randomized, double-blind, placebo controlled trial on the use of the antidepressant venlafaxine XR (Effexor XL) for individuals with spinal cord injury. The study is designed to study the efficacy and tolerability of venlafaxine XR as a treatment for major depression, measuring not only the reduction in the severity of the depression, but also changes in pain and the quality of life. This collaborative studies involves our center along with University of Washington, Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago, University of Michigan and University of Alabama, Birmingham.

Physical Therapists Research Method to Help Stroke Patients Walk Correctly Again

For patients who have experienced an acute stroke, learning to walk again is just one of the many challenges they face on the road to recovery. Poor motor skills and profoundly weak muscles make it extremely difficult for them to regain a symmetrical or balanced gait pattern using traditional therapy methods. Often times, patients relearn to walk incorrectly and slowly, which makes reintegration into the community very difficult. But the Body Weight Treadmill study at Baylor Rehab is researching a method to change that. By using a special treadmill system that supports part of the patient’s body weight, physical therapists are able to teach patients to walk properly in a safe and secure environment. Once the patient regains their strength and re-establishes a more balanced gait pattern, they can begin to walk on flat surfaces and eventually learn to walk correctly again. So far, researchers report successful results and ultimately hope to include the technique in traditional therapy methods for stroke patients.
INPATIENT REHABILITATION SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

Patients at Baylor Rehab have access to the services and advanced technology of Baylor Dallas, as well as more than 1300 physicians of all medical specialties who can serve as consultants. A team of rehabilitation specialists led by a physiatrist, designs intensive, individualized treatment plans to help patients achieve a maximum level of independence. Particular attention is paid to helping the patient return to school or work, leisure and home activities. Inpatient services at Baylor Rehab include:

**Traumatic Brain Injury Program**

The Traumatic Brain Injury Program offers a full continuum of services including acute rehabilitation, individual outpatient therapies, a day-neuro rehab program and Real Life Rehab, a community-based program.

**Spinal Cord Injury Program**

The spinal cord injury program treats patients with paraplegia, tetraplegia and those who are ventilator-dependent. Long term care and is available through the outpatient clinic and post acute rehab care can be provided through the Real Life Rehab program.

**Cerebrovascular Accident Program**

Stroke patients with varying degrees of disability are provided with treatment programs specific to their age, considering vocational, daily living and recreational goals.

**Orthopaedic and Neurological Disorders**

These include, but are not limited to, persons who experience an amputation, total joint replacement, aneurysm, anoxia, arteriovenous malformation, encephalopathy, Guillian-Barré syndrome, multiple sclerosis, cancer, spinal or brain tumor, post-polio syndrome, post-transplant laminectomy and lupus.

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

In addition to offering physical rehabilitation services, Baylor Rehab reaches out to current and former patients as well as others in the Metroplex with monthly support groups for people who have experienced traumatic brain injury (TBI), spinal cord injury (SCI) and stroke. People who experience these conditions usually require a lifetime of rehabilitation and re-adjustment as these conditions can be extremely debilitating and often change the affected person’s life forever—not to mention family, friends and caregivers. The support groups are designed to offer these people a chance to socialize with others who have shared the same experience. The TBI support group, known as Focus, is held once a month and addresses topics relevant to people with TBI such as information on community programs and the long-term effects of TBI. For people who have experienced a spinal cord injury, an education and support group known as Support, Challenge, Inspire, is held monthly as well as addresses topics such as home modification, relationships after an SCI and even tips for dining out in Dallas. This group also holds an end-of-the-summer outing usually with a recreational theme.

The TBI program at Baylor Rehab annually sponsors the Mountain High Camp, a five-day camp in Red River, N.M. for young adults who have experienced a TBI. In 2005, Baylor Rehab established its own camp for TBI survivors here in Dallas known as Friends of Hope, a day camp held four times a year sponsored by Dallas area churches and synagogues. For fiscal year 2009, Baylor Health Care System will report $468 million in community benefit, which includes providing care for charity patients and patients enrolled in government programs such as Medicare and Medicaid, as well as the unreimbursed costs of medical education, research and community programs.

LEADERSHIP

Jon Skinner, president, Baylor Institute for Rehabilitation