



Your Choice for Rehab Makes a Difference in How Quickly You Get Home

When it comes to rehabilitation care, did you know you have a choice of where you receive therapy? Many people do not, and where you select to receive rehab can often make a great difference in how fast you return home or to your community.

“More and more the responsibility for receiving the appropriate medical care is falling on the patient or patient’s family,” said Dana Thomas, Area Director of Marketing Operations for HealthSouth. “Unfortunately, when a patient is ready to be discharged to a rehabilitation hospital, they are typically in pain, and it is an emotionally charged atmosphere. They or their family members don’t have the time to research what type of facility will best benefit the patient.” This can result in a longer rehabilitation and can sometimes prove more costly. “Our goal is to discharge our patients back home as soon as possible,” Thomas said.

“According to the Patients’ Bill of Rights, the patient is the final decision maker, not the physician or the case manager,” said Shelana Gibbs-McElvy, M.D., Medical Director, HealthSouth Sewickley.

Many times patients are discharged to a skilled nursing facility. “Skilled nursing is appropriate for those who cannot tolerate the level of therapy in a rehabilitation hospital. In a skilled nursing facility, a patient may receive as little as one hour of therapy per day, where a rehabilitation hospital provides three hours or more a day,” Thomas said. HealthSouth has three hospitals in the Pittsburgh area. HealthSouth Harmarville, Sewickley and Monroeville.

Many patients are only given the option of going to a skilled nursing facility when they would benefit from a rehabilitation hospital such as HealthSouth. “HealthSouth provides a full spectrum of care, and we deliver what is medically appropriate for the individual patient from inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation, long-term acute care and home health,” Thomas said. A patient discharged to HealthSouth can enter skilled nursing, progress to the rehabilitation hospital and outpatient services without the aggravation of finding a new provider for each level of care. Often you do need authorization even if staying within our continuum.

Another advantage of receiving rehabilitation care at HealthSouth is the medical supervision. At HealthSouth, each patient’s care is managed by two physicians—an internist and a physiatrist. Physiatry is a medical specialty dedicated to rehabilitation. “In a skilled nursing facility a patient is only required to be seen by a physician once every 30 days. At HealthSouth our patients are seen every day by their physician or physicians,” said Dr. Gibbs-McElvy. In addition, the patient to nurse ratios is often



Dana Thomas, Area Director of Marketing Operations for HealthSouth



*Shelana Gibbs-McElvy, M.D.,
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Difference

By Janice Lane Palko

higher in skilled nursing facilities. "Our patients receive more responsive care," said Dr. Gibbs-McElvy. "In skilled nursing the patient to nurse ratio can be as high as 20 patients to one nurse.

Skilled nursing is generally less costly than a rehabilitation hospital, but it often is a case of "penny wise pound foolish" because the stay in a skilled nursing facility is typically longer than that of a rehabilitation hospital, making skilled nursing more costly in the long run.

To make patients aware that HealthSouth's care is available to them, HealthSouth has 27 liaisons working within the region's hospitals. The patient or family member need only contact the liaison, who will visit the patient in the hospital room and do a clinical evaluation. "We evaluate patients before discharge because we want to provide the appropriate care and not admit someone we cannot help," said Thomas. "There are very few patients who need rehabilitation that we cannot help, but if we know of a better facility, we will recommend it."

Upon intake, a patient is given a Functional Intake Matrix score and is regularly evaluated to track the patient's progress. The patient is also evaluated at the time of discharge. HealthSouth patients can expect results. The average length of stay is 14 days.

In addition, patients at HealthSouth benefit from having the nation's largest Rehabilitation Hospital system in charge of their care. HealthSouth has 202 hospitals nationwide and is a \$2 billion company, meaning they are financially stable, which allows HealthSouth to be a leader in the field. "We offer the latest technology to augment the patient's progress and clinical outcome," Thomas said.

An educated patient is a better served patient. "Too often I meet people after they've received rehabilitation treatment elsewhere, and they tell me they wished they'd known about HealthSouth," said Dr. Gibbs-McElvy.

To learn more about HealthSouth, visit the Website at www.WeAreRehab.com. To request a consultation, call 1-877-937-REHAB. ▲