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Follow-up Care System-Spinal Cord Injury Manual

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Regional Spinal Cord Injury Center of the Delaware Valley
NIDRR-designated

Spinal Cord Injury Manual

A publication of the
Regional Spinal Cord Injury Center
of the Delaware Valley

The Regional Spinal Cord Injury Center of the Delaware Valley provides a comprehensive program of patient care, community education, and research. It is a federally designated program of Thomas Jefferson University and its affiliated institutions of Thomas Jefferson University Hospital and Magee Rehabilitation Hospital.



Spinal Cord Injury Patient-Family Teaching Manual

**A Publication of the
Regional Spinal Cord Injury Center
of the Delaware Valley**

Researched and prepared by the clinical
personnel of Thomas Jefferson University
Hospital and Magee Rehabilitation Hospital

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www.spinalcordcenter.org

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Dedication

The Handbook Committee of the RSCICDV gratefully acknowledges the assistance and dedication of all who contributed to this manual, and all the others who worked so hard to make this Handbook a reality.

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Spinal Cord Injury Follow-Up Care System

Introduction

The Spinal Cord Injury Follow-Up Care System is a program that will assist you in your lifetime care once you are discharged from the hospital. The follow-up care system is structured with primary team members being you and your family, the physiatrist (doctor who specializes in physical therapies), nurse clinician and case manager. Team members available for consultation include physical therapists, occupational therapists, recreational therapists, speech therapists, dietitians, urologists, gynecologists, plastic surgeons and podiatrists.

The nurse clinicians are available in the Spinal Cord Injury Follow-Up Clinic at Magee Rehabilitation Hospital and act as the coordinator and liaison between the spinal cord-injured person and all members of the team. The coordination of care is essential to decrease duplication of services and contradictions of management. This will provide you with a consistent person to contact.

The comprehensive follow-up service is then provided through regularly scheduled appointments — the first at one month and then annually. Your inpatient case manager will schedule your one month appointment. You will receive a reminder letter through the mail from the outpatient scheduler, giving specific instructions for your visit. At that visit, you will spend time with each of the primary team members and any consulting members that you request.

The team will discuss your current needs and problems and assist you in addressing them. Some of the commonly discussed areas include medical, equipment, transportation, vocational, educational and adjustment issues.

In addition to your formal appointments, the follow-up nurses are available for questions or problems. They will either discuss the issue over the phone or they may want to have you come in for an evaluation by your physiatrist.

The Spinal Cord Injury Follow-Up Care System also works closely with family members, support groups, family physicians, visiting nurses, therapists, consulting physicians and others involved with your care, helping them to understand spinal cord injury and your individual needs. After each

scheduled appointment, a comprehensive report is written, which can be sent to anyone involved in your care.

Transportation for Follow-Up Care

Your Own Vehicle

Parking is available at Magee Rehabilitation Hospital. It is a good idea to have someone with you the first time you use this parking to make sure you can use the lot safely. You will need to stop at the front desk first to obtain a parking token.

Ambulance

Depending on your insurance, a local ambulance service may bring you to your appointment. If you require assistance with an ambulance service, contact the Spinal Cord Injury Follow-Up Clinic's case manager, and he or she will assist you.

If you are using ambulance transport, please remember to obtain a contact telephone number of the ambulance company so it can be called to have you transported home.

Paratransit

If you live in Philadelphia County and you qualify for transportation under the ADA, you can request transportation within 5 county areas. However, senior citizens are limited to transportation within Philadelphia County only. Your case manager can work with you to apply for Paratransit. There is a fee for each direction of your ride. One caregiver can ride for free once this fact is told to Paratransit at the time your ride is scheduled. All other passengers that accompany you must pay a fee as well.

Paratransit is a division of SEPTA, which provides accessible transportation for individuals. Unlike Logisticare, Paratransit can be used for any reason, including social outings.

Paratransit needs to be contacted for scheduling 72 hours or 3 days in advance. The more notice you provide Paratransit, the better the service will be able to accommodate your departure and return times. They are required to give you a confirmation and pick up time at both ends. The drivers of Paratransit cannot assist you down stairs; however, drivers will assist you in getting in to the vehicle.

Besides Paratransit, you are able to use wheelchair accessible buses and accessible regional rail lines also. By using these, you are not tied to a scheduled departure and return time.

However, unless you live right on the route that you are taking, you need to be able to get to the appropriate stop on your own.

If you would like more information on Paratransit, you can contact your case manager or call SEPTA Paratransit at 215-580-7145.

Other Counties and States

If you live in a county outside of Philadelphia County, your county must provide public transportation for you. Each county has its own system, and you will need to check with your case manager or county office for further information.

Bucks County Transport:	215-794-8360
Chester County: Rover	877-873-8415
Delaware County: Community Transit	610-532-0300
Montgomery County: Transnet	215-542-7433
NJ Transit (accessible Service):	
Northern/Central NJ	800-772-2222
Southern NJ	800-582-5946
State of Delaware: DART	800-355-8080

Medical Assistance Transportation Program (MATP)

If you live in Philadelphia County and are on Medicaid, you can fill out an application for MATP to provide you with transportation to and from medical appointments only. The doctor responsible for your primary medical care must sign the application. Depending on the level of your disability, your transportation may be by Paratransit, car or ambulance. Pick-up time at both ends is set prior to the date of your appointment. Please remember to allow at least 72 hours or 3 days advance notice for scheduling a pick up. You may schedule a pick up for a medical appointment up to one week prior to the appointment.

Drivers are responsible for making sure that you get from the ground floor of your home to the vehicle. They are responsible for making sure that you board the vehicle safely. Depending on your mode of transportation, the driver will make sure that you get to the ground floor entrance of the medical building where your medical appointment is located or to the floor where your medical appointment is located. If you need a companion to travel with you, you need to notify MATP when you make your reservation. MATP drivers are not responsible for carrying packages or assisting you with personal items.

To get more information about MATP, contact your case manager or call 1-877-835-7412.

Please Note: Transportation is not restricted to medical appointments. It includes appointments or visits for medical management, going to the pharmacy to pick-up medication, vendors for medical supplies, DME, etc.

Prescriptions

On or before your discharge date, you will be given prescriptions for your medications and supplies. It is you and your family's responsibility to find a local pharmacy and medical supply store to supply them. Your inpatient case manager may be able to assist you with the name of a pharmacy or medical supply store if you require assistance before you go home.

Call the Spinal Cord Injury Follow-Up Clinic at least **five days** before your prescriptions run out and a physician will renew them.

If you have any questions or problems with your medications or supplies, please call the Spinal Cord Injury Follow-Up Clinic at 215-587-3406 for assistance.

There is an outpatient prescription telephone message line at 215-587-3100. You can leave a message as to which medications you need renewed. Please state the medication's name slowly, the dose, the number of times per day you take the medication and your pharmacy's telephone number or your address where you would like a prescription sent. Also, state and spell your name, it is also helpful to provide us with your date of birth. This helps us efficiently get your prescription filled. Provide your telephone number as well on the message in case questions arise.

Family / Community Physician

Before discharge you and your family should identify a primary care physician (PCP) in your community. Your inpatient case manager will assist you in locating a PCP if your insurance company does not pick one for you. Many patients utilize the Ambulatory Care Clinic at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital at 215-955-8465.

It is very important that you have a physician in your community for medical problems that may arise not related to your spinal cord injury (for instance, colds). Spinal cord injury is a unique disability and medical issues that arise often require different treatments. The Spinal Cord Injury Follow-Up Care System can be a resource for your physician.

Once a family physician has been identified, the Spinal Cord Injury Follow-Up Care System will contact him or her and help to coordinate your medical care.

Many insurance companies require you to obtain a referral for each visit from your PCP before allowing you to see a physiatrist or consultant at Magee. Your insurance carrier may also require you to pay a copayment at each physician visit. The Outpatient Registration Staff can assist you with questions concerning how the referrals are to be made out prior to your appointment.

Scheduling

All appointments are scheduled through outpatient scheduling. To schedule or cancel an appointment or if you have any questions or concerns, please call 215-587-3394.

Problems / Emergencies

If you ever feel that something doesn't look or feel right, please call the Spinal Cord Injury Follow-Up Clinic.

In case of a problem, you should:

1. Call the Spinal Cord Injury Follow-Up Clinic at 215-587-3406 and explain your problem. The Follow-Up Clinic is open Mondays through Fridays (except on holidays) from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The Spinal Cord Injury Follow-Up Clinic will assist you in arranging the best way to manage your problem. If the Follow-Up Clinic is closed, you must call your PCP or go to the Emergency Room.

You may need to:

- See your family doctor or other medical specialist.
 - Be seen by a visiting nurse at home.
 - Go to the hospital emergency room.
 - Come to the Spinal Cord Injury Follow-Up Clinic for a scheduled appointment with a physiatrist.
2. If you feel it is a life-threatening situation, call 911. In a life-threatening emergency, always call 911.
 3. Let the Spinal Cord Injury Follow-Up Clinic know of the problem you experienced and where you received your treatment.

Equipment

Your therapists and nurses have ordered the most appropriate equipment to meet your needs. If your permanent equipment is

not available at the time of discharge, you may go home with temporary or loaner equipment. The permanent equipment ordered for you will replace this equipment when it arrives.

The physical therapy and occupational therapy staff as part of the Spinal Cord Injury Follow-Up Care System holds an equipment clinic. The clinic is designed to address problematic issues to evaluate any changes that may be necessary to equipment you already have or to order new equipment.

Call the Equipment Office at 215-587-3032 with questions about your equipment or to get an appointment with the equipment clinic.

Glossary

Paratransit	Federally subsidized mode of transportation for individuals with physical disabilities. Services are provided through state or regional agencies such as SEPTA, New Jersey Transit, and DART.
PCP	Primary Care Physician or family doctor.
SCI Follow-Up Care System	A clinic that provides lifetime follow-up care to all persons with spinal cord injury and is located at Magee Rehabilitation Hospital.
MATP	Federally subsidized modes of transportation for those individuals with physical disabilities going to and from medical services. Eligible persons must qualify for Medicaid in order to use this service.

References

1. Regional Spinal Cord Injury Center brochure published January 2007.

Comments and Feedback

The staff of the center has recently spent a lot of time and effort in revising this manual. However, we realize that those who are actively reading and using the manual can improve it. As a part of our program of continuous quality improvement, we ask you to help guide our efforts to improve the manual.

In the next section of the chapter are two forms. The first form is an overview by chapter that seeks to identify those areas of the manual that could benefit the most from additional work. We also seek to identify any major areas of concern that have not been addressed.

The second section is a more focused questionnaire that has as its goal the specific items that should be targeted. For example, should an item be added to the glossary or the definition changed. Should a drug be added to the discussion of bowel programs?

The more specific the comments are the more likely that we will be able to make the improvements that form the basis of your idea. By communicating with the Regional Spinal Cord Injury Center of the Delaware Valley, however, users grant us permission to use any information, suggestions, ideas, drawings or concerns communicated for any purpose we choose, commercial, public or otherwise, without compensation or acknowledgement whatsoever.

Thank you for taking the time to assist us in improving this manual.

Sincerely,

SCI Manual Committee

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Feedback Form

Rate each chapter by placing an “X” on the scale underneath the term that best captures your opinion. Using the next page, provide specific comments regarding your ratings. Feel free to make copies of the next page.

	No Opinion	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent
Credits / Front Matter					
Table of Contents					
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Master Glossary					

Suggestions and Comments

Chapter: _____

Page(s): _____

Comments: _____

Any terms that need to be added to the glossary? How would you define the terms?

Any section or paragraph that was not clear?

Any drawing or sketch that would help to illustrate the material being covered?

Any additional topic that should be covered?

Any questions you have that you feel should have been answered by the manual?

What is the question?

What is the suggested answer?

Any references that should be added? Any other resources that should be mentioned?

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