

Major Post-Acute Rehabilitation Research Underway

The inpatient rehabilitation field is collaborating with leading researchers to initiate major new research focused on post-acute rehabilitation in inpatient rehabilitation hospitals and units and other settings. The research compares clinical treatments, outcomes, and cost effectiveness across different sites of care. Through this \$2 million coordinated effort, the following eight research projects have been funded and are underway. A national panel of prominent researchers, physicians, and others selected these projects.

- 1) **Burke Rehabilitation Hospital -- “Rehabilitation Following Total Knee Replacement, Total Hip Replacement, and Hip Fracture: A Case Controlled Comparison of Cost and Outcomes.”** The objective of this study was to determine whether outcomes differed between patients with single knee or hip joint replacement surgery undergoing rehabilitation in an inpatient rehabilitation facility (IRF) vs. skilled nursing facilities (SNFs).
- 2) **National Rehabilitation Hospital - “JOINTS Study--Post Acute Rehabilitation of Patients with Joint Replacements in IRFs and SNFs.”** This study will follow up on the initial JOINTS study of hip and knee replacement rehabilitation in 11 skilled nursing facilities (SNFs) and 11 inpatient rehabilitation facilities (IRFs) located throughout the nation. It will expand to study expenditures, particularly the assignment of expenditures to the initial rehab episode and downstream health care utilization such as hospitalizations.
- 3) **National Rehabilitation Hospital – “How Comorbidities can be Taken into Account to Determine Rehabilitation Admission to an SNF or IRF.”** This study will determine how severity and/or various comorbidities at admission are associated with discharge severity and function.
- 4) **Fleming-AOD – “eSNFdata.com.”** This project will create a data repository and automated analytic system similar to eRehabData® for the capture, storage and analysis of functional outcome SNF data as well as several reimbursement measures.
- 5) **Fleming-AOD – “Rehabilitation Placement Factors Data Collection Instrument.”** This project will design and construct a data collection instrument to include the factors that may impact post-acute rehabilitation placement.
- 6) **Frazier Rehabilitation Hospital - “Outcomes of Patients with Cardiac or Pulmonary Conditions in an Inpatient Rehabilitation Facility or a Skilled Nursing Facility.”** This study will determine the differences in outcome by site (IRF/SNF); determine predictors of outcomes within an IRF or SNF; and identify characteristics that differentiate patients’ success in an IRF versus an SNF.

- 7) **UVA Inpatient Rehabilitation Hospital – “Inpatient Rehabilitation Populations.”**
This study, among other things, will determine the frequencies of various cardiopulmonary population types referred to the IRF and SNF; characterize the clinical outcomes and outcome differences of available cardiopulmonary populations in the IRF and SNF; and compare outcomes of additive pulmonary or cardiac comorbidities (secondary diagnoses to primary cardiac diagnoses) with outcomes of pulmonary or cardiac diagnoses alone.

- 8) **Washington University School of Medicine – “Rehabilitation Outcomes for Older Adults with Acute Deconditioning: Acute Rehabilitation vs. Skilled Nursing Facility Treatment.”** This study looks at 400 patients admitted to The Rehabilitation Institute of St. Louis or Barnes-Jewish Extended Care between February 2005 and February 2006, and will determine functional status and hospital readmission rates at six months’ post-discharge from the rehabilitation setting, and collect information about utilization of health services (hospitalization, home care, SNF care) in the year prior to the incident hospitalization that is not available in the medical record.

Preliminary findings of these and related research efforts will be highlighted in a February 2007 research symposium in Washington DC. The symposium will be co-sponsored by the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago’s Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Measuring Rehabilitation Outcomes and Effectiveness, the American Medical Rehabilitation Providers Association, the American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, the American Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine, the American Hospital Association, the Association of Academic Physiatrists, and the Foundation for Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation.