

Swing Bed Program Helps Patients Get Continuing Care in Their Community

About Rankin County Hospital District



Rankin County Hospital District (RCHD) is a 15-bed rural critical access

community hospital in Rankin, Texas, offering emergency services, diagnostic imaging, lab services, cardiac rehabilitation, several outpatient services and family practice medicine. RCHD serves an extremely rural community, with a population of just over 730 people.

Swing Bed Program

RCHD supports a “swing bed” program designed specifically for transitional care provided in rural and critical access hospitals, allowing patients to move from acute care to skilled nursing and rehabilitation services within the same facility. Many times, after a patient has experienced an acute illness or injury, they need additional care before they are healthy enough to return home.

The swing bed program enables patients to prepare for discharge and achieve greater independence. Patients who no longer need intensive care but aren't ready to go home can access services, including physical therapy. The program allows patients to access the therapy they need to regain their strength, enabling them to return home as independently as possible. It also reduces the need to go to a nursing home or travel outside of the district to more urban areas.

Program Results

At RCHD, they have expanded the program by attracting patients beyond their immediate community while keeping the small-town feel their patients prefer. Many of their clinical staff, including physicians, nurse practitioners and physician assistants, have practiced at RCHD for more than 10 years, creating familiarity and trust with patients and their families.

Without the swing bed program, patients needing extra help for therapy would have to travel over an hour away, taking them out of the community and requiring family and loved ones to drive over an hour to visit patients who may be there for days, weeks or months. Together, these factors enable RCHD to provide excellent health care in a rural setting where patients know and trust the providers delivering their care.