The Spinal Cord Injury Long Term Care (SCI-LTC): is a 26 bed residential, long-term care facility designed and staffed specifically for Veterans with spinal cord injuries who need long term non-acute medical care. It is located on the B level of the Cares Tower at the Louis Stokes Cleveland VA Medical Center and was established in May of 2011.

Services include: medical, nursing, wound care, restorative nursing, social work, psychology, PT, KT, reiki therapy, recreation therapy, speech therapy, pastoral care, peer support, ventilation support, pharmacy, and nutrition support.

The long term care facility is a cultural transformation that welcomes veterans to a home like environment where active involvement regarding your care is strongly encouraged. Enjoy personalizing your room, surfing the internet, beautiful views of university circle and Rockefeller gardens, socializing or relaxing in the private courtyard.

Referrals:

If you need a clean, safe, home like environment and are interested in the SCI Long Term Care facility, your SCI coordinator will refer your application to the Cleveland SCI LTC admission committee for review. Please contact your SCI Coordinator to discuss if SCI LTC living may be right for you.

For more information phone 216-791-3800, extension 2312.

Contact the SCI/D Center:

For inpatient referrals send a consult to a SCI physician.

Admissions: call the SCI Social Worker at 216-791-3800, extension 4249
For more information about the Cleveland SCI/D Center, call Sabrina Boska at 216-791-3800, extension 6763

SCI/D RECREATION & Sports by Janelle Howard

Updates From Recreational Therapy

The DAV Winter Sports Clinic will be held March 30th –April 6th in Snowmass CO. 24 veterans from Ohio will be traveling to the WSC this year. There will be three days of Nordic or Alpine skiing as well as trap shooting, snowmobiling, scuba diving, rock climbing, curling and snowshoeing.

National Veterans Wheelchair Games (NVWG) 2013

The National Veterans Wheelchair Games will be held in Tampa Florida July 13th –18th. Applications have been mailed. The athletes will compete in seventeen different events including swimming, track and field, basketball, quad rugby, and power soccer.

Project Healing Waters: Fly Fishing

Tying sessions have begun for 2012- 2013. Every second and fourth Wednesday, volunteers from PHW provide a clinic to veterans to teach them how to tie flies in preparation for Fly Fishing Outings. On September 8th, 25 veterans from Cleveland, Dayton, Cincinnati, and Columbus participated in the 3rd Annual Patriot’s Day Fishing Outing at Castalia Fish Hatchery near Sandusky Ohio.

Art Therapy

Art Therapy uses the creative process of art making to improve and enhance the physical, mental, and emotional well being of the veteran. The SCI/D Center has an active inpatient and outpatient Art Therapy program. If you are interested in participating please see Janelle Howard.

There are a number of community outings taking place during the year. For more information on any of these exciting opportunities contact Janelle Howard at (216) 791-3800 ext: 3996.

See what’s new by Richard Strozewski

MOVI (Mobile Video): A Telehealth Service:
For many Veterans and their families affected by Spinal Cord Injury, ALS, or MS, traveling to the Cleveland VAMC to receive services can be a daunting and expensive undertaking. Because of this, not only do many Veterans not take advantage of the ancillary services available through the center, many delay their visits with their providers until they become ill. This is where Telehealth Services and specifically MOVI can help. The Mobile Video system is a combination of technologies and processes that will allow Veterans to use their home computers and internet to have private face to face visits with their doctor, nurse, psychologist, or chaplain. It will allow you to renew prescriptions, receive care giver support, or obtain education services.

When visiting with our provider, ask if you are a good candidate for MOVI and, if you are, one of the Telehealth Specialists from the Spinal Cord Injury Service will contact you to get you started.

Resources for you

Groups: Dr. Angela Kuemmel has a weekly SCI Support Group that meets on Mondays from 2-4PM in the SCI dining room. If you are interested in being a part of this group, please contact Dr. Kuemmel at 216-791-3800, ext. 4095. A Care Giver Support Group is also available through our tele-health program. It meets twice a month via a toll free call in line. The group focuses on providing help for care givers of SCI/ D Veterans. If you are interested in joining this group, please call Dr. Kuemmel.

SCI Patient Education Classes: Inpatient classes take place Thursdays from 3:00-4:00pm in the SCI dining room.

Monthly Advanced Patient Education: Take place on the 4th Monday of each month and are open to all SCI patients, families, caregivers 2-3PM.

Peer Support: For more information about our support program, contact the SCI Social Worker.


Paralysis Resource Guide: is from the Christopher and Dana Reeves Foundation and is very helpful to families and individuals affected by a spinal cord injury.

News from Therapy by Martin Kilbane, P T

Cleveland SCI/D Center Shine in Las Vegas

Staff members from the Cleveland SCI/D showcased their talents in the care of veterans with Spinal Cord Injury, ALS, and MS in front of 700 attendees at the 2012 Annual Academy of SCI Professionals (ASCIP) conference in early September. Eight of our staff members contributed to the strong conference content.
with 5 outstanding lectures and 1 outstanding poster presentation. Thomas Dixon, PhD presented a lecture entitled, Psychological Adjustment to SCI. Stephen Selkirk, MD, PhD, Frances McClellan, RN, MSN, and Monique Washington, RN, MS presented a lecture entitled Creating an Interdisciplinary Approach to the Care of Patients with ALS. Seema Sikka, MD and Monique Washington, RN, MS presented a lecture entitled Depicting Pressure Ulcer Risk Factors Knowledge in SCI Patients. Steven Brose, DO presented a lecture entitled Reducing Sphincter Spasms to Improve Voiding Using Sacral Dermatome Stimulation. Martin Kilbane, PT, OCS presented a lecture entitled Critical Analysis of Shoulder Preservation Programs for Individuals with SCI: Are Current Programs Utilizing the Best Evidence for Exercise Selection? Angela Kuemmel, PhD presented a poster entitled, Travel Challenges and International Accessibility: How Professionals Can Help patients with SCI Prepare. All presentations received high reviews.

The ASCIP conference is an international interdisciplinary organization devoted to improving care through sharing knowledge and expertise. It is dedicated to advancing the care of people with spinal cord injury and disorders. Members represent a continuum of SCI rehabilitation from research to clinical settings, from VA, private and academic sectors. ASCIP is comprised of American Paraplegia Society (APS), Academy Spinal Cord Injury Nurses, Psychologists and Social workers (PSW), and Therapy Leadership Council (TLC).

How are we doing?

In 2012 the SCI/D Center cared for:

* 47 acute rehabilitation patients with SCI/D
* All were male with an average age of 58. 77% were Caucasian and 33% African American.
* Average length of stay for acute rehabilitation was 37.5 days.
* 59% of our acute rehab patients were admitted after a traumatic injury (like a fall). 41% occurred following a nontraumatic injury (like a degenerative condition). No admissions were due to ALS/MS.
* 76% of our patients were discharged back to their home in the community
* The majority of patients reached or exceeded their functional goals by the time of discharge.
* Overall, Veterans rated our program a 9 out of 10, and 100% of them indicated they would recommend our rehab program to another veteran with SCI.

News from the SCI/D Center by Frances McClellan, RN, MSN

SCI LTC Unit: The SCI Long Term Care unit is open with 26 beds for SCI/D residents. It is a beautiful facility with a lovely courtyard, family space, and dining room. If you get a chance please stop by and meet the staff.
SCI Outpatient Clinic: Congratulations to Leslie Ford, Norma Smith, Dierdra Johnson-Jennings, Mary Breen in completing their training to infuse Tysabri in the outpatient clinic setting. Tysabri is a medication approved for adult patients with relapsing forms of Multiple Sclerosis (MS). They are the only nurses providing this service in the VAMC. In addition, Leslie and Norma presented at the Executive Leadership Council in October on their outstanding relationship based care implementation process.

SCI Inpatient Unit: Look for Primary Care Nursing on the SCI unit. Registered Nurses are now responsible for providing all the direct patient care.

Referral Criteria

Any Veteran with a diagnosed spinal cord injury/disorder whose functioning has the ability to improve from therapies. • Needs 24 hour rehabilitative nursing care. ?The person has the capability to participate in an individualized rehab program with increased intensity comprised of up to three hours of therapy per day, five days per week. ?The patient is medically stable and free of communicable diseases requiring isolation. • SCI Patients requiring acute rehab to restore function after prolonged debilitating medical course. The person has an established discharge destination.

Scope of Services

SCI System of Care provides services for eligible veteran’s 18 years and older with spinal cord injuries; including tetraplegia, paraplegia, complete and incomplete injuries. Referrals are from Ohio, Southern Michigan, Western PA and New York, and West Virginia.

SCI also provides care to veterans with SCI disorders that result in neurologic deficits such as Multiple sclerosis, other demyelinating diseases, intraspinal neoplasms, vascular insults to the spinal cord, inflammatory disease of the spine or spinal cord, degenerative spine disease, unstable traumatic lesions of the spinal column to prevent neurologic deficits. Veterans with ALS for care coordination.

We provide direct 24 hour inpatient acute rehabilitative nursing care and an individualized rehab program with increased intensity comprised of up to three hours per day therapy six days per week.

Our SCI Outpatient clinic offers comprehensive services during the administrative work week, including life long follow-up, health promotion, physical medicine and rehabilitation and therapies, medical and surgical interventions and consultations, nursing care, Social work, psychological assessment and treatment, vocational rehabilitation and tele-health services.

Payer sources and fees: while insurance is billed if available, the veteran will not receive a bill for what insurance does not cover. VA fees are determined by the veteran classification/means testing. The majority of veterans with SCI are classified as category 4 which eliminates co-pays.
Mission, Vision, and values

The Mission of the Louis Stokes Cleveland Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center Spinal Cord Injury System of Care (SCSC) program is to provide high quality, state of the art health care services to those veterans with spinal cord injury and or disorders (SCI/D).

We provide compassionate and ethical care based on current evidence and clinical standards. This mission is accomplished through a comprehensive health care delivery system that encompasses acute medical and surgical care, rehabilitation, patient and family education, psychological, social, and vocational care that spans from initial injury to end of life. The professionals who serve in our SCSC program are dedicated to continuous professional development, research, and advocacy on behalf of our veterans.

Our Vision is to be on the leading edge of spinal cord injury care and research.

The Cleveland VA SCSC program is committed to improving continually the health care services we provide and maintaining a positive, caring, and helpful attitude toward all with whom we interact: patients, other employees, and visitors. We place the highest value upon both education and research and seek to expand our knowledge at all levels and in all areas of endeavor. We respect the autonomy of veterans and acknowledge the importance of including patients and their families in planning of care.

Phone: 216-791-3800 ext 6763
Fax: 216-707-5936
E-mail: Sabrina.Boska@va.gov

“Never in the history of the world has any soldier sacrificed more for the freedom and liberty of total strangers than the American soldier”

- Zell Miller (D)