



Shepherd Center



Shepherd Center Community Health Needs Assessment & Implementation Plan



December 2015





Shepherd Center

**BRAIN AND SPINAL CORD
INJURY EXPERTS**

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Restoring Hope, Rebuilding Lives







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**A Letter from the
Chairman to the Community**

Dear Friends,

Shepherd Center is pleased to present our triennial Community Health Needs Assessment and Implementation Plan.

With input from a range of people representing the interests of persons with acquired brain injuries, spinal cord injuries, and Multiple Sclerosis we have identified community health needs of these individuals as they return to their local community to rebuild their lives with hope, independence and dignity.

These contributors provided expert knowledge, experience, and guidance in helping the Center review and plan programs and services to assist with, and advocate for, the full inclusion of persons with brain injuries, spinal cord injuries, and Multiple Sclerosis in all aspects of community life, and promote safety and injury prevention awareness programs.

Our Board of Directors has adopted the 2015-2018 Community Health Needs Implementation Plan and is committed to leveraging our existing programs, services, and resources to assist each person treated at the Center in achieving their highest level of functional independence and return to living in their home community.

Shepherd Center will focus primarily on addressing the community health needs of persons who have sustained brain and spinal cord injuries who reside in the eight counties around metro Atlanta. In addition, we will address local outpatient community needs for persons with MS through the Carlos Multiple Sclerosis Institute. When practical and financially feasible, the Center will provide internet and telephone contact as a resource center to the broader brain and spinal cord injury population throughout the country.

Please visit us at www.shepherd.org for more information and follow our progress.

Warm Regards,

*James H. Shepherd, Jr.
Chairman of the Board*



Acknowledgement

Shepherd Center's Community Health Needs Assessment and Implementation Plan was developed by Shepherd staff with the assistance of Legacy Consulting Group and generous input from people with specialized knowledge and representing the brain and spinal cord injury communities, and persons with Multiple Sclerosis, including individuals who have sustained spinal cord injuries, caregivers, clinicians, service providers, advocates, state agency representatives, and Georgia and national associations' members.

The individuals listed below contributed immeasurable value in the formation of this report, providing personal and caregiver first-hand experience, expert medical direction and public policy information and effective advocacy representation and input. Shepherd Center would like to acknowledge these individuals and thank them for their generous time and contributions to this assessment.

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About Shepherd Center



Shepherd Center is a private, not-for-profit, hospital located in Atlanta, Georgia, specializing in medical treatment, research and rehabilitation for people with spinal cord injuries, brain injuries, Multiple Sclerosis, chronic pain and other neurological conditions

As a world-renowned provider of comprehensive specialized rehabilitation for people with spinal cord injury, brain injury or stroke, Shepherd Center has consistently

been ranked by U.S. News & World Report among the top 10 rehabilitation hospitals in the nation.



In 2014, Shepherd Center admitted 1,016 inpatients with 92 percent of admissions coming from seven southeastern states. Over the past year, Shepherd admitted persons with brain and spinal cord injuries from 28 states. In addition, Shepherd had more than 45,000 outpatient visits.

Last year, 43% of inpatient admissions were for spinal cord injuries, 45% for acquired brain injuries, and 12% had a dual diagnosis, neuro or other diagnoses. By gender, 74% were males and 26% females.

Shepherd Center 2014 Admissions



History

Founded in 1975, Shepherd Center is dedicated to helping people with catastrophic injuries and illnesses reclaim their lives with dignity, independence and hope. Shepherd Center's mission is to help people with temporary or permanent disability caused by injury or disease, rebuild their lives with hope, independence and dignity, advocating for their full inclusion in all aspects of community life while promoting safety and injury prevention.



Patients at Shepherd Center get more than medical care; they get an experience that brings healing and hope. We understand that patients are going through more than just recovery from an injury, they are learning a new way of life.

We also serve as an ambassador to help patients navigate their journey over a lifetime. When it comes to functional improvements, our patients are more independent and have better outcomes than the national average. Our return-to-home and return-to-work rates are among the best in nation.

Shepherd Center offers a complete continuum of care, from evaluation and medical treatment to rehabilitation and lifelong support programs. Those we serve have access to programs that many other facilities don't have, like therapeutic recreation, community outings, pastoral care, extensive family training, assistive technology, back-to-school programs, peer support, vocational counseling and return-to-work programs, and enhanced, post-discharge case management for all patients to help ease the transition back into the community.



Shepherd Center is designated as a Model Spinal Cord Injury System of Care by the National Institutes on Disability and Rehabilitation Research and is accredited by The Joint Commission and the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF).



Purpose and Scope

The purpose of Shepherd Center's triennial community health needs assessment and implementation plan is primarily to enhance the health and wellness of individuals living with spinal cord injuries, brain injuries, and Multiple Sclerosis when they return to live in their community.

While Shepherd Center is a local, regional, state, national, and international resource for individuals who have sustained spinal cord and brain injuries, or who have Multiple Sclerosis, the scope of this assessment addresses the health needs of the target populations who live within Shepherd's local community, the eight counties around metro Atlanta including: Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Douglas, Fulton, Gwinnett and Henry.

Approach and Process

Shepherd Center's approach to addressing the community health needs for people living with brain injuries, spinal cord injuries, and Multiple Sclerosis is designed to be updated every three years to assess progress in meeting the specialized health needs of these communities.

It begins with defining the target community, and then assessing the health needs of these communities using available health data and input from individuals representing the interests of and with specialized knowledge of the unique health needs of persons within these communities.

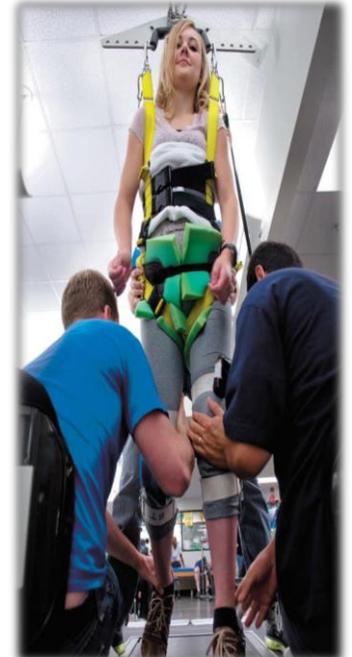
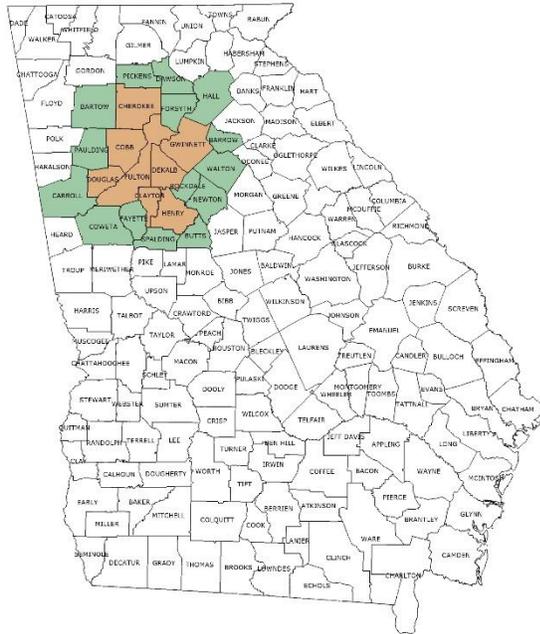


From the list of health needs identified by members of the community with specialized knowledge, the leadership at Shepherd Center developed strategies and plans to address these community health needs.

Progress towards implementing these strategies and plans are ongoing and reported to the public via the hospital's website in each triennial report.

Shepherd Center's Local and Regional Community

In 2014, 56% of Shepherd Center's total admissions came from Georgia with 29% coming from eight Atlanta area counties. The 22 counties of the greater Atlanta region accounted for 39% of total admissions and 70% of admissions coming from Georgia. Over the same period, Shepherd Center had 45,264 outpatient visits including a substantial outpatient population of Multiple Sclerosis patients.



Shepherd Center 2014 Admissions by Region

Community	Description	Admissions	% of Admissions	% of Georgia Admissions
Local	8 Counties of Metro Atlanta	299	29%	53%
Regional	22 Counties of Greater Atlanta	399	39%	70%
State	All Counties In Georgia	569	56%	100%
Out-of-State	Non-Georgia Residents	447	44%	N/A
Total		1,016	100%	

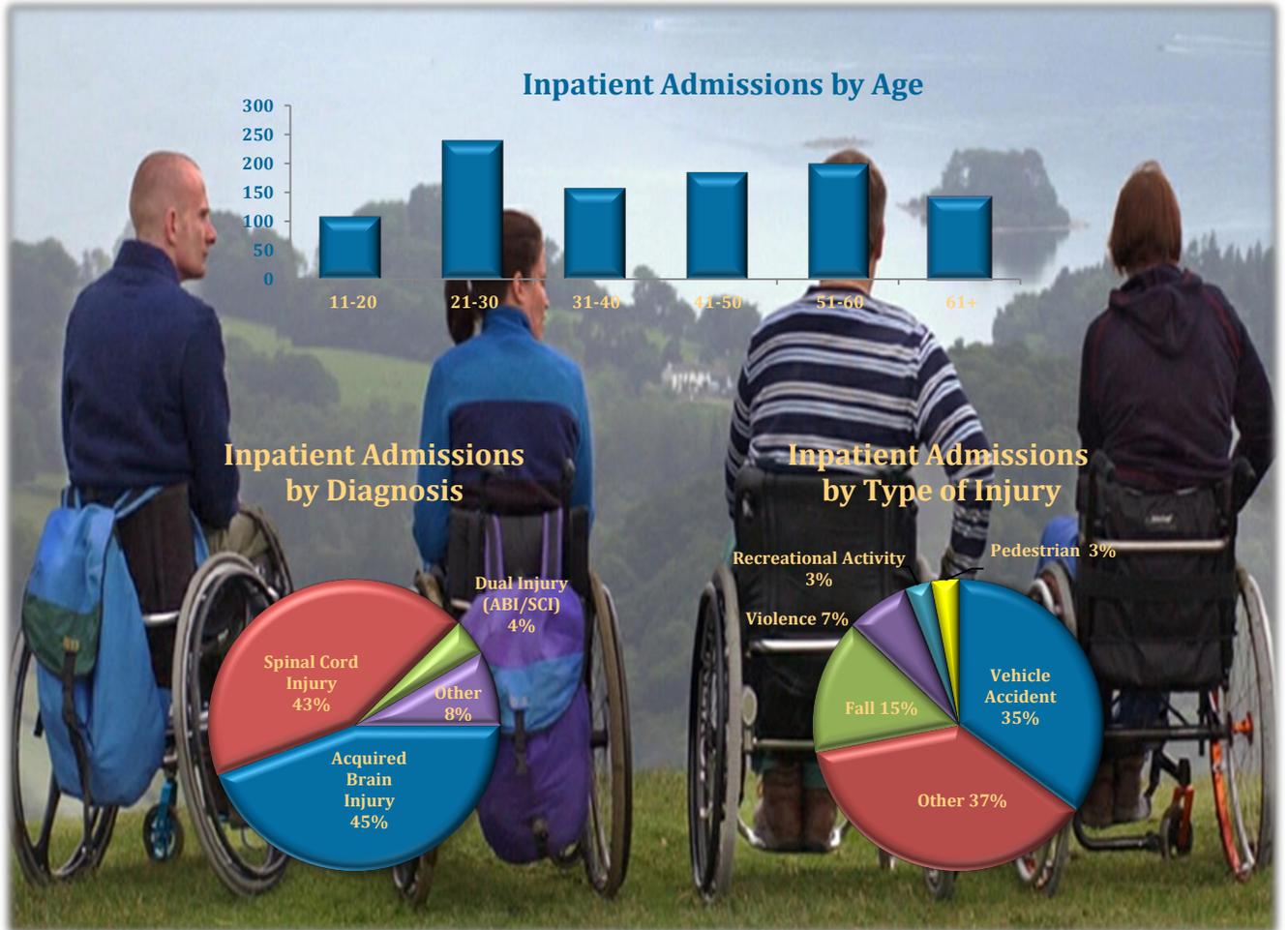
Source: Shepherd Center

Based on the residence of brain injury, spinal cord injury and Multiple Sclerosis patients treated, Shepherd Center defines its local community as the eight counties around metro Atlanta including: Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Douglas, Fulton, Gwinnett and Henry counties. Shepherd's regional community includes 22 counties in the greater Atlanta region as described in the map above.



Shepherd Center's Inpatient Community Demographics

In 2014, Shepherd Center admitted 1,016 persons with 92% of inpatient admissions fairly evenly split between acquired brain injuries and spinal cord injuries. The majority of Multiple Sclerosis patients were treated on an outpatient basis. Males continue to comprise the majority of inpatient admissions at 74% with females accounting for 26% of admissions.



Shepherd Center's Day Program enables patients who no longer need 24-hour nursing care to continue their recovery and rehabilitation while living in nearby apartments provided by the Center. Services are focused on functional return of skills necessary for community reintegration. Housing for patients in the day program is provided for the duration of the rehabilitation program. To qualify for housing, patients must live more than 60 miles from the Center.



Facts About Traumatic Brain & Spinal Cord Injury

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) is defined as a blow or jolt to the head or a penetrating injury that disrupts the function of the brain.

- **What Causes TBI?**

The leading causes of TBI in the United States are:

- falls (41%)
- motor vehicle-traffic (14%)
- assaults (11%)
- struck by / against (16%)

Blasts are the leading cause of TBI for active duty military in war zones. It has been estimated that over 50% of all combat injuries are blast injuries.

- **How many people have TBI?**

The Centers for Disease Control & Prevention estimates that in the U.S. at least 2.5 million people sustain a TBI each year.

Of these approximately:

- 50,000 die (137 per day)
- 280,000 are hospitalized (767 per day)
- 1.9 million are treated & released from an Emergency Department

- **What are the risk factors for TBI?**

- men had higher rates of TBI than women.
- hospitalization rates were highest among persons 65 or older
- children ages 0-14 had the highest rates of ED visits for TBI
- assaults were leading cause of TBI for persons 15-24 years.
- MVA were leading cause of TBI for persons 15-44 years.
- falls were leading cause of TBI for children 0-14 & adults over 45 years of age.

Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) occurs when a traumatic event results in damage to cells within the spinal cord or severs the nerves that relay signals up and down the spinal cord.

- **What Causes SCI?**

The leading causes of SCI in the United States are:

- motor vehicle accidents (38%)
- falls (30%)
- acts of violence (14%)
- sports (9%)
- other (9%)

- **How many people have SCI**

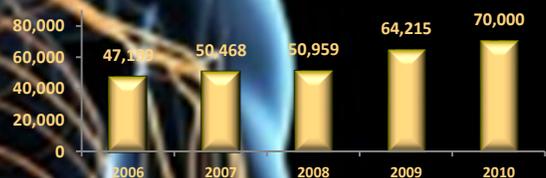
It is estimated that approximately 12,500 people sustain a SCI in the United States each year. In 2014, it is estimated that 276,000 persons are living with SCI or spinal cord dysfunction in the United States.

- **Who is at highest risk for SCI?**

- males account for 80% of new SCI cases.
- about 23% of injuries occurred in non-Hispanic blacks since 2010, which is higher than the proportion of non-Hispanic blacks in the general population (12%)
- The average age at injury is currently 42 years.

In Georgia, the incidence of TBI has grown from 47,199 in 2006 to 70,000 in 2010, a 48% increase. Over this period, persons with TBI who were hospitalized in Georgia grew from 6,818 to 8,500, a 25% increase.

**Georgia 2006-2010
Treated for TBI in Emergency
Department**

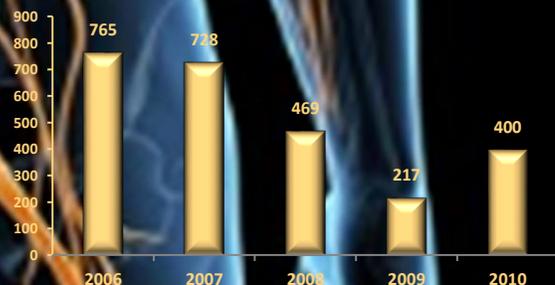


**Georgia 2006-2010
Hospitalized with TBI**



In Georgia, the incidence of spinal cord injuries grew from 765 in 2006 to 850 in 2010, an increase of 11%.

**Georgia 2006-2010
Hospitalized with SCI**



Shepherd Center's Mission

Shepherd Center's mission is to help people with temporary or permanent disability caused by injury or disease, rebuild their lives with hope, independence and dignity, advocating for their full inclusion in all aspects of community life while promoting safety and injury prevention.

Independence

After surviving a catastrophic injury, the primary goals of patients admitted to Shepherd Center are to achieve the highest level of functional independence and return to living in their home community.



Functional Independence Measures

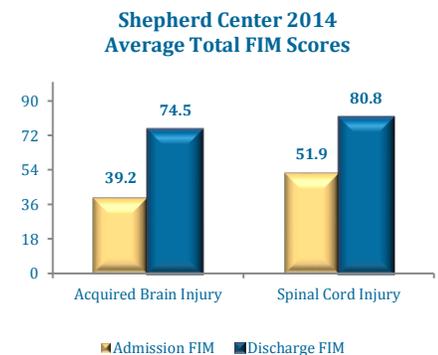
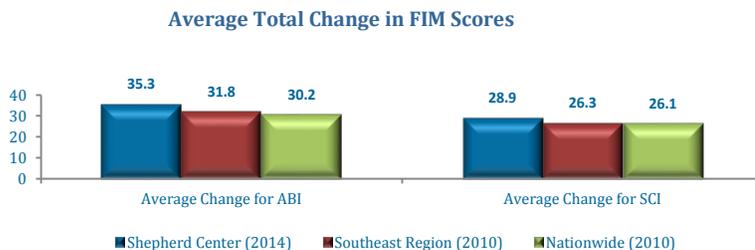
The Functional Independence Measure (FIM) provides a uniform measurement of disability based on the International Classification of Impairment, Disabilities and Handicaps. This system measures a person's disability and indicates how much assistance is required for the individual to carry out activities of daily living. There are 18 dimensions (13 motor and five cognitive items) each of which are assessed on a seven point ordinal scale that ranges from (1) total assistance or complete dependence to (7) complete independence. Total scores range from 18-lowest to 126-highest, indicating level of function. Patient's FIM are assessed at admission and then again at discharge to determine the change in FIM.

In 2014, patients with acquired brain injury admitted to Shepherd Center had an average FIM score of 39.2 on admission, increasing on average to 74.5 at discharge, an average increase of 35.3. This was a greater average change in FIM than the 31.8 increase in the southeast region and 30.2 increase nationwide (2010 most recent southeast & nationwide data).

Spinal cord injury patients admitted to Shepherd Center in 2014 had an average FIM score of 51.9 on admission, increasing on average to 80.8 at discharge, an average increase of 28.9. This was a greater average change in FIM than the 26.3 increase in the southeast region and 26.1 increase nationwide (2010 most recent southeast & nationwide data).

- > Eating
- > Grooming
- > Bathing
- > Upper body dressing
- > Lower body dressing
- > Toileting
- > Bladder management
- > Bowel management
- > Toilet transfer
- > Shower transfer
- > Locomotion (ambulatory or wheelchair level)
- > Stairs

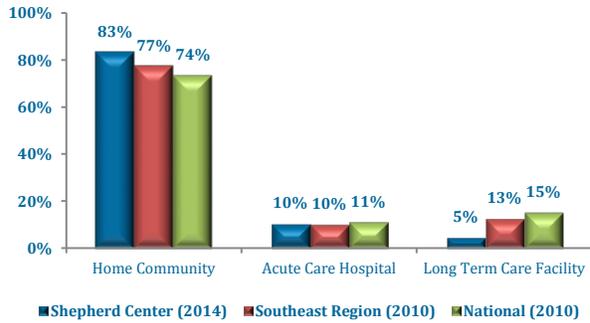
- > Cognitive comprehension
- > Expression
- > Social interaction
- > Problem solving
- > Memory



Higher FIM scores represent more functional independence than lower FIM scores.

Sources: Shepherd Center and Uniform Data System for Medical Rehabilitation.

Destination Following Inpatient Discharge from Hospital
Acquired Brain Injury Patients



Source: Uniform Data System for Medical Rehabilitation

Patients with acquired brain injuries who were treated at Shepherd Center were significantly more likely to return to their home community following discharge from the hospital.

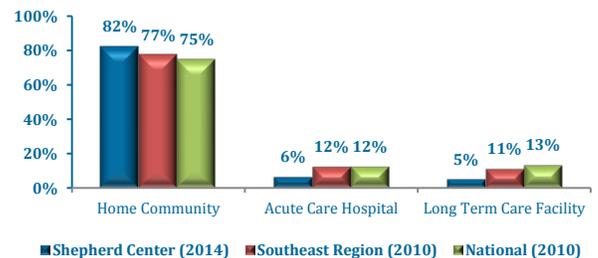
In 2014, 83% of ABI patients at Shepherd were discharged to their home community. For comparison, 77% of ABI patients in the eight states of the southeast region and 74% of ABI patients nationwide were discharged to their home community (2010 most recent southeast & nationwide data).



In a similar manner, patients with spinal cord injuries who were treated at Shepherd Center were significantly more likely to return to their home community following discharge compared to SCI patients within the region and nationwide.

In 2014, 82% of SCI patients at Shepherd were discharged to their home community. For comparison, 77% of SCI patients in the southeast region and 75% of SCI patients nationwide were discharged to their home community (2010 most recent southeast and nationwide data).

Destination Following Inpatient Discharge from Hospital
Spinal Cord Injury Patients



Source: Uniform Data System for Medical Rehabilitation

Community Health Needs versus Other Community Needs

Individuals who have sustained a brain injury or spinal cord injury have multiple unique and specialized needs when they return to live in their home community. This assessment is specifically focused on the health needs, rather than the overall community needs, of persons who have been discharged from the hospital with brain and spinal cord injuries when they return to live in the community. In addition, persons with Multiple Sclerosis also have community health needs that we will address for our local residents.

Other community needs of persons with ABI and SCI include accessible, available and affordable housing and transportation, educational and employment assistance, financial assistance, support and respite for caregivers of individuals who have ABI and SCI and live within the community. These needs are real, growing, and frequently unmet within many communities; however, they are beyond the scope of this health needs assessment.

While Shepherd Center receives patients with ABI and SCI from across the United States, it is not practical or realistic for the Center to address the community health needs of its entire patient population when they return to their individual local communities. Thus, Shepherd Center will primarily focus efforts on the community health needs of individuals with ABI and SCI who live within the eight counties surrounding metro Atlanta. The Center will seek to address community health needs of its broader patient population when this can be accomplished through internet-based or telephone contact or as a resource center.

Shepherd Center's 2015 Community Health Needs

In interviews with people with specialized knowledge of and expertise in advocating for members of the acquired brain injury, spinal cord injury, and multiple sclerosis communities, we reviewed the community health needs identified in Shepherd Center's October 2012 Community Health Needs Assessment. There remains consistent and overwhelming consensus that each of the previously identified issues continue to affect nearly all persons within the ABI and SCI communities regardless of income, insurance or minority status. In addition, many of these issues are also experienced by persons with Multiple Sclerosis. Community-based health needs are particularly evident as persons who have sustained catastrophic injuries return to their local neighborhoods, throughout Georgia and across the United States, and move forward with rebuilding their lives with hope, independence and dignity.

Based on specific input from advocates representing the interests of the ABI, SCI, and MS communities, we have not ranked community-based health needs in this triennial report, as they are all important and inter-connected and need to be addressed in a coordinated manner if we are to address the "community health need puzzle" for these specialized target groups.



Need for community-based primary care physicians willing to accept individuals with ABI and SCI.

Need for specialized services to meet the unique home health needs of persons with ABI and SCI.

Need for community-based programs to provide caregiver education, training and support.

Need for community-based specialized rehabilitation services for individuals with ABI, SCI, and MS.

Need for community care coordination and management professionals with an understanding of the unique pain management, behavioral adjustment and sexuality-related issues of individuals with ABI and SCI.

Need for enhanced community educational outreach on the prevention of primary injuries, secondary complications, appropriate standards of care, and aging related issues of individuals with ABI and SCI.

Need for telephone and web-based peer support systems for individuals with ABI, SCI, and MS.

Need for community-based exercise programs and facilities for individuals with ABI, SCI, and MS.



Shepherd Center's Community Health Needs Implementation Strategy

Due to limited resources and the extraordinary cost of helping each individual with an ABI and/or SCI rebuild their life with hope, independence and dignity, Shepherd Center's community health needs implementation strategy is focused on leveraging its existing programs, services, and resources to assist each person treated at the Center in achieving their highest level of functional independence and returning to living in their home communities.



The Center's implementation strategy will primarily focus on addressing the community health needs of persons with spinal cord and brain injuries who reside within the eight counties around metro Atlanta (Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Douglas, Fulton, Gwinnett and Henry counties) where it can realistically provide access to community health programs, services, and resources. In addition, it will seek to address local community health needs of persons with Multiple Sclerosis.



When practical and financially feasible, the Center will seek to provide internet-based or telephone contact and serve as a resource center to assist in addressing community health needs of the broader brain injury, spinal cord injury, and Multiple Sclerosis client populations.



Shepherd Center's 2015-2018 Community Health Needs Implementation Plan

While Shepherd Center currently provides a wide range of programs and services to meet the community health needs of persons who have sustained a brain injury, spinal cord injury or have Multiple Sclerosis, no single healthcare organization has the resources to address all of the health needs of these target populations within the community.



The overall objective of Shepherd Center's 2015-2018 Community Health Needs Implementation Plan is to ensure that most of the pieces of the "community health needs puzzle" are in place to assist each person treated at the Center in achieving their highest level of functional independence when they return to their local community.



For each of the eight community health needs assessed by persons with specialized knowledge and expertise in advocating for members of our target communities, we will provide the following:



Description of Need



Objectives for Addressing Need



Shepherd Center's Ongoing Programs and Services Addressing Need



Progress in Addressing Need



Community Health Need: Need for community-based primary care physicians willing to accept patients with brain and spinal cord injuries.

Description of Need

Many persons who have sustained brain and/or spinal cord injuries have difficulty finding primary care physicians in their local community who are willing to accept new and/or returning patients after they have sustained this type of injury. This is usually due to local primary care physicians' inexperience in treating patients with ABI and SCI, lack of knowledge of the appropriate standards of care and treatment protocols for common secondary complications experienced by these patients, lack of physical facilities to adequately examine patients, unique patient behavioral issues related to their injury, and concerns over adequate reimbursement for services provided.

Objectives for Addressing Need

- *Increase awareness and understanding of medical issues of patients with brain and spinal cord injury through access to the video series developed by Shepherd Center.*
 - *Understanding Brain Injury*
 - *Understanding Spinal Cord Injury*
- *Provide access to standards of care and treatment protocols for common secondary medical complications resulting from brain and spinal cord injury, including:*
 - *Pressure sores*
 - *Urological complications*
 - *Gastrointestinal complications*
 - *Respiratory disease (i.e. pneumonia)*
 - *Deep vein thrombosis*
 - *Spasticity management*
- *Provide telemedicine peer support to local physicians via access to physician specialists at Shepherd Center.*
- *Promote best practices in physician office design and patient examination techniques to facilitate physical access for patients with brain and spinal cord injury within doctor offices.*
- *Increase awareness and understanding of patient behavioral issues related to their injury and educate physicians regarding appropriate behavioral interventions for dealing with these issues.*
- *Provide information regarding resources for medical services reimbursement to physicians.*
- *Develop a physician resource package designed to assist local primary care physicians in integrating patients with brain and spinal cord injury into their existing medical practice.*

Shepherd Center's Ongoing Programs/Services Addressing Need



Video Series: *"Understanding Brain Injury" and "Understanding Spinal Cord Injury"*

The video series, being distributed across the United States, is part of an integrated awareness campaign to educate physicians, families and loved ones of people affected by a recent spinal cord or brain injury.

The series, essentially a "101" of brain and spinal cord injury, is the first and most comprehensive series of its kind and utilizes a 45-minute video about brain injury and an hour-long video about spinal cord injury, along with two micro-sites (BrainInjury101.org and SpinalInjury101.org), a companion booklet, posters and fliers distributed in trauma care hospitals and via national health care associations.

The campaign was more than a year in the making and involves spinal cord and brain injury physicians and experts, neuroscientists, advocates and a special appearance by [Lee Woodruff](#), CBS Morning News contributor, author and wife of Bob Woodruff, the ABC News journalist who sustained a catastrophic brain injury while reporting on troops in Iraq.



Standards of Care & Treatment Protocols: *Shepherd Center has developed standards of care and treatment protocols for persons with brain and spinal cord injuries when they return to their communities that are available to community physicians. Shepherd Center having been designated as one of 14 Model Systems of Care for spinal cord injury in the United States by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research continues to promote adherence to established standards of care and treatment protocols.*



Telemedicine Physician Peer Support: *Shepherd Center's multidisciplinary medical staff members are available via telephone for physician peer support to any community care physicians when Shepherd clients return to live in their local communities.*



Progress in Addressing Need

Shepherd Center continues to provide numerous avenues for community physicians to increase awareness and understanding of medical issues that patients with brain and spinal injury may experience when they return to their local communities. In addition, to the programs and services described above, Shepherd Center has developed a series of 21 podcasts that physicians, healthcare professionals and the general public can access via www.shepherd.org covering multiple topics concerning individuals with ABI and SCI. Furthermore, the Center has numerous YouTube videos that address Brain Injury Education, Spinal Cord Injury Education, and multiple Physician Videos covering a wide range of medical topics. In spite of these efforts, getting community-based primary care physicians to accept patients with brain and spinal cord injuries continues to be problematic, particularly in small rural communities. Progress is ongoing.



Community Health Need: Need for specialized home health services to meet the unique needs of persons with brain and spinal cord injuries.

Description of Need

Many persons with brain and spinal cord injuries need specialized home health services designed to address the unique cognitive, medical and rehabilitation needs associated with these types of injuries. These services typically require a different frequency and intensity in the delivery of home health services due to the nature of the injury sustained. For example, a person with a brain injury may need multiple short cognitive rehabilitation interventions each day lasting for relatively short periods of time in order to maximize improvement in functional independence measures. Frequently, these patients are medically stable, yet not able to participate in the level of intensive therapy (e.g. three hours per day) required for admission to post-acute rehabilitation facilities.

Objectives for Addressing Need

- *Identify best practices and/or innovative care models for specialized home health services to meet the unique home health needs of persons with brain and spinal cord injuries.*
- *Meet with existing home health organizations providing services within metro Atlanta to discuss the need for and potential for developing specialized home health services to meet the unique home health needs of persons with brain and spinal cord injuries.*
- *Develop home care management models for persons with brain and spinal cord injuries utilizing standards of care and treatment protocols developed by staff at Shepherd Center.*
- *Evaluate the potential for utilizing technology to remotely provide specialized home health services to address the unique cognitive, medical and rehabilitative needs of persons with brain and spinal cord injuries.*
- *Evaluate potential for developing a specialized training and development program for "Transition Coaches" to assist in providing the specialized home health services required by individuals with brain and spinal cord injuries who may not be ready to fully participate in a post-acute rehabilitation setting.*
- *Meet with insurance case management professionals to discuss reimbursement for specialized home health services to address the unique needs of persons with brain and spinal cord injuries who may not be ready for intensive post-acute rehabilitation services.*
- *Meet with state health planning and licensing agencies to discuss feasibility of developing a specialized category of home health services designed to address the unique home health needs of persons with brain and spinal cord injuries.*

Shepherd Center's Ongoing Programs/Services Addressing Need



myShepherdConnection.org: *Is a web-based community access program designed to provide a broad range of educational tools to help patients and their caregivers following a brain injury, spinal cord injury or stroke. The web-based program has personal care manuals, caregiver guides, resources to assist in returning to the community, safe at home recommendations, and specific sections for brain injury, disorders of consciousness, stroke, spinal cord injury, and Multiple Sclerosis.*



Affiliation with Craig Hospital and Kindred Healthcare: *In April 2015, Shepherd Center entered into an affiliation with Craig Hospital in Englewood, Colorado, and Kindred Healthcare to work collaboratively to pursue new neuro-rehabilitation models that seek to improve patient care across the health continuum. The parties intend to work collaboratively and with third-party hospitals and healthcare providers to expand access to high-quality and innovative medical and specialty rehabilitation care. This care will range from catastrophic to post-acute to meet the needs of this unique patient population. The parties also intend to support educational programming and research that supports specialized rehabilitative care across an expanded national footprint. They also will share clinically proven practices and educational programming, while continuing to preserve separate and independent business operations. The parties anticipate that their unique affiliation will expand service offerings and provide expertise that delivers best-in-class, post-acute neuro-rehabilitation care to cities throughout the nation. Gary R. Ulicny, Ph.D., President and CEO of Shepherd Center, stated, "we expect the affiliation of Shepherd Center, Craig Hospital and Kindred Healthcare to increase our combined ability to help people with brain and spinal cord injuries access the high-intensity rehabilitation care and medical services we collectively offer. We will raise the bar in neuro-rehabilitation care nationwide and offer high-quality care that best meets patient needs in locations closer to or at home."*



Progress in Addressing Need

Shepherd Center does not have the resources to provide specialized home health services to meet the unique needs of persons with brain and spinal cord injuries in its local community, but does offer a wealth of information via its website www.shepherd.org geared specifically to healthcare professionals and the general public in identifying and addressing specialized health needs in the home. Web access to YouTube videos and podcasts are readily available to support individuals helping members of the ABI and SCI communities in their local environments, and the Center is accessible as a phone resource for local home health agencies throughout the country. The affiliation with Craig Hospital and Kindred Healthcare will help develop new neuro-rehabilitation models seeking to improve patient care across the continuum. While not providing specialized health services in the home, Shepherd Center continues to provide substantial informational and support resources to other providers in the home, thus significant progress has been achieved in a supportive role in addressing this community health need.



Community Health Need: Need for community-based programs to provide caregiver education, training and support.

Description of Need

After surviving a catastrophic injury, the primary goals for patients admitted to Shepherd Center are to achieve the highest level of functional independence and return to living in their home community. While many patients are able to achieve functional independence, there is a substantial need for community-based programs to provide caregiver education, training and support.

Objectives for Addressing Need

- *Provide families with training and education to address ongoing and recurring needs of persons with brain and spinal cord injuries through existing caregiver programs developed by Shepherd Center.*
- *Assist caregivers in identifying support and respite options for families and caregivers within their local community.*
- *Facilitate opportunities for networking, communication, and peer support among people with brain and spinal cord injuries, family members and caregivers.*
- *Support and foster the ability of persons with brain and spinal injuries, their family members and caregivers to become self-advocates for community-based programs.*
- *Assist in identifying crisis management tools and services for persons with brain and spinal cord injuries, their family members and caregivers.*

Shepherd Center's Ongoing Programs/Services Addressing Need



myShepherdConnection.org: *Is a web-based community access program designed to provide a broad range of educational tools to help patients and their caregivers following a brain injury, spinal cord injury or stroke. The web-based program has personal care manuals, caregiver guides, resources to assist in returning to the community, safe at home recommendations, and specific sections for brain injury, disorders of consciousness, stroke, spinal cord injury, and Multiple Sclerosis.*



Shepherd Family Caregiver Classes: *The Center provides classes for patients, family/caregivers to make sure they understand the persons' injury or illness, what needs to be done to prepare for discharge from the rehabilitation hospital, and how to solve problems they may encounter after discharge. The average caregiver attends three to five days of training and education at Shepherd Center.*



Shepherd Center RESCUE Program: *In conjunction with community police and fire departments, the RESCUE program is a community service program providing home alert labels and education for people with physical and or cognitive limitations who find themselves in emergency situations. The mission is to aid in quicker response times and creation of better emergency plans.*



Shepherd Center Transition Support Program: *This program works to maximize client and family independence and autonomy by providing education, guidance and support upon discharge to home to improve health and safety outcomes. Clients entering the program will collaborate with a Transition Support Coordinator to achieve goals by:*

- *Moving toward optimal health, safety and wellness management*
- *Following discharge plan and home care instructions to prevent re-hospitalization*
- *Developing a client-centered treatment plan in the home*
- *Locating and utilizing appropriate community resources (financial, healthcare, wellness, etc.)*
- *Developing self-advocacy for medical, health and wellness needs.*



Caregiver Support Services: *Individuals from outside the community can access Shepherd Center's website www.shepherd.org for patient and family resources, support groups, advocacy and helpful links.*



Progress in Addressing Need

While Shepherd Center offers a wealth of on-site and web-based support for caregiver education, training and support, there remains a large unmet need for local community-based programs to provide these services throughout the country. Furthermore, there continues to be limited respite opportunities for caregivers within most local communities. Due to Shepherd Center's limited resources, we will continue to focus on providing caregiver education, training and support in the local Atlanta community and through distance-learning opportunities that are web-based. Substantial progress has been achieved in developing caregiver education, training and support opportunities via Shepherd Center, yet minimal progress has been made in the development of community-based programs outside of Shepherd's local community.



Community Health Need: Need for community-based specialized services for individuals with brain injuries, spinal cord injuries, and Multiple Sclerosis.

Description of Need

Many persons with brain injuries, spinal cord injuries, and Multiple Sclerosis need specialized rehabilitation services when they return to their local community following discharge from a rehabilitation hospital.

Objectives for Addressing Need

- *For patients who reside within the local community (the eight county metro Atlanta area), provide community-based specialized outpatient rehabilitation services programs at Shepherd Center or Shepherd Pathways in Decatur, Georgia.*
- *For patients who live more than 30 miles from the Shepherd Center, provide specialized outpatient rehabilitation services programs at Shepherd Center or Shepherd Pathways through the organization's residential day program.*
- *Serve as an informational resource to community-based rehabilitation service providers to organization's outside the local community who would like to provide specialized rehabilitation services to individuals with brain injuries, spinal cord injuries, and Multiple Sclerosis.*
- *With limited resources, it is not practical for the Shepherd Center to provide community-based specialized rehabilitation services outside the local community.*

Shepherd Center's Ongoing Programs/Services Addressing Need



Shepherd Center's Day Program: *The Day Program enables patients who no longer need 24-hour nursing care to continue their recovery and rehabilitation while living in nearby apartments provided by Shepherd Center. Services are focused on the functional return of skills necessary for community reintegration. Services include physical and occupational therapy, nursing, respiratory therapy, counseling sessions, recreation therapy and educational training sessions. The Day Program helps minimize the chance of further medical complications that are secondary to the neurological injury or illness. A wide range of services are offered to assist persons in going back to work or school to help make this transition go smoothly, including:*

- ***Medical care:*** *Nursing care continues in the day program and may include care for neurogenic bowel and bladder (person lacks control due to a brain, spinal cord, or nerve condition), spasticity, blood pressure, blood clots, contractures, and strength and mobility issues.*
- ***Return-to-work counseling:*** *Individuals may or may not be able to return to the same type of work they did before their injury. Counselors help find jobs or careers that are right for each individual.*
- ***Back-to-school program:*** *Through our No Obstacles Program, therapists design a back-to-school plan that can include in-school awareness and sensitivity training for school staff and students, as well as instruction regarding medical issues, which may come up during the school day.*
- ***Life-skills training:*** *Therapists help individuals practice the skills they will need to get through a normal day. This can include everything from grooming and dressing to managing their schedule and working with others.*
- ***Mobility training:*** *Outings into the surrounding neighborhood will help individuals practice skills needed in their own community.*

- **Family/caregiver training:** Classes for family or other caregivers to make sure they understand the persons' injury or illness and their needs.
- **Housing:** Patients in the Day Program are provided housing, free of charge, for the duration of their rehabilitation program if they live more than 60 miles from the Center.



Shepherd Pathways: This program is located in Decatur, Georgia and provides post-acute, community-based brain injury services. The facility includes treatment rooms, two large therapy gyms, state-of-the-art technology, outdoor sports equipment and a putting green for recreational and leisure activities.

The residential program has 12 designated beds that are supported by licensed professional nurses and life skills trainers, who support individual treatment goals in collaboration with the treatment team.

Shepherd Pathways provides brain injury programs:

- Day Program
- Residential Program
- Outpatient Program
- Short-term respite care
- Supported-living residence
- Specialized neurologic rehabilitation
- Youth stroke program
- Summer academics programs
- Back-to-school reintegration
- Return to work program
- Pre-driving and driving programs
- Vestibular rehabilitation
- Swallowing program
- Health & wellness
- Follow up case management
- No cost housing (For families with persons in the Day Program who live 50+ miles from Atlanta)
- Transportation at pick up points in the Atlanta area
- Supported living (A 6-bed home for long-term living available to people with ABI needing 24/7 care)



Shepherd SHARE Military Initiative: The SHARE Military Initiative is a comprehensive rehabilitation program that focuses on assessment and treatment for service men and women who have sustained a mild or moderate traumatic brain injury and PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) from the Afghanistan and Iraqi conflicts. The SHARE (Sharing Hope and Recovery Excellence) Military Initiative provides:



Day Programs:

- Two week assessment with recommendations for treatment
- Eight to 12 week treatment program
- 12 to 24 months of community transition follow-up
- Complimentary housing with on-site life skills support
- Specialty medical services: pain management clinic, orthopedics, neurology, psychiatry, sleep studies, and a full continuum of other specialty medical care.

Professional Services:

- Dedicated Military Team: *Physiatrist/Rehabilitation Medicine, PT, OT, ST, Recreation Therapy, Nursing, Case Management, Neuropsychology, Psychology and Counseling, Chaplaincy, Substance Abuse Counseling*
- PTSD (EMDR- Eye Movement Desensitization Reprocessing) Outpatient Treatment
- Individual, Family and Group Therapy
- Client/Family Education
- Cognitive Rehabilitation
- Vestibular Evaluation and Treatment
- Vocational/Academic Evaluation and Community Re-entry
- Life-Skills Training and Coaching
- Transition to Home – Tele health Services
- Web-Based Support and Education
- Resource Rehabilitation to Include Assistance in Navigating Medical Board process and VA System



On-Site Services:

- Cafeteria – Complimentary for Military Patients
- Olympic Size Pool and Access to Aquatic Program
- Full Access to Wellness Center, Including Personal Trainers
- Assistive Technology
- Drivers' Evaluation and Training
- Peer Support Services
- Wheelchair Seating
- Financial Planning
- Legal Assistance



Beyond Therapy®: This program is an intensive, neurological rehabilitation program created by Shepherd Center that integrates the disciplines of physical therapy and exercise physiology. The program facilitates neurological and functional recovery in people who have sustained a neurological insult, such as a spinal cord injury, brain injury or stroke, and have exhausted traditional means of outpatient therapeutic intervention.

Beyond Therapy is based on research suggesting the central nervous system is capable of synaptic plasticity and anatomical reorganization through “activity-based” therapy. This is called neuroplasticity. Beyond Therapy® combines the concepts of athletic training and physical therapy to promote neuroplasticity.

Traditional therapy programs are designed to help patients become as independent as possible using compensatory strategies and training on how to care for themselves after discharge from the hospital. In contrast, Beyond Therapy® focuses on promoting lifelong wellness and maximizing muscle and neural return through a program of intensive strengthening and motor patterned activity concentrating on weaker muscles and nerve connections that may have been ignored in the initial phases of recovery.

Central objectives of the program are: optimizing recovery, toning seldom-used muscles and decreasing secondary complications that typically occur among people with neurological disorders.





Shepherd Outpatient Clinics: *Shepherd Center provides the following outpatient clinics:*

- *Shepherd Pain Institute*
- *Bracing Clinic*
- *Seating Clinic*
- *Urology Clinic*
- *Wound Care Clinic*
- *Multi-Specialty Clinic*
- *DPS- Diaphragm Pacing System Evaluation*
- *Rehabilitation Clinic (PT,OT, ST)*
- *Lower Extremity Orthotics Clinic*
- *Upper Extremity Rehabilitation Clinic*
- *Adapted Driving Services*
- *Adaptive Technology Consultation Services*
- *Swallowing Disorders Clinic*
- *Brain Injury Outpatient Services*
- *Spinal Cord Injury Outpatient Services*



Eula C. & Andrew C. Carlos Multiple Sclerosis Rehabilitation and Wellness Program :

The Multiple Sclerosis Rehabilitation and Wellness Program at Shepherd Center is a dedicated program for the rehabilitative treatment and wellness of patients diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis (MS) and related conditions. Thousands of people with MS have been treated at Shepherd using a wide range of neurological and rehabilitative services.

- *MS Skilled Therapy for specific health issues to address gait dysfunction, swallowing issues, significant increases in fatigue, muscle weakness, poor balance and falls.*
- *Intensive Therapy – MS Day Program designed for patients who may benefit from intensive PT, OT, ST and wellness intervention. Housing for patients in the MS Intensive Day Therapy Program is provided at no cost for the duration of the rehabilitation program for patients who live 60 miles or more from Shepherd Center.*
- *MS Wellness is designed to assist individuals living with MS to learn to manage their health in both a physical and psychosocial sense.*



Progress in Addressing Need

Shepherd Center continues as a world-renowned leader in providing specialized access to treatment for persons who have sustained brain injuries, spinal cord injuries, or have been diagnosed with MS. Within the local and regional community, the Center continues to provide community-based specialized services through its Atlanta campus and Shepherd Pathways in Decatur. For patients the Center’s Day Programs housing is provided, free of charge, for the duration of their rehabilitation program if they live more than 60 miles from Shepherd Center.

Outside of the metro Atlanta community, Shepherd will continue to provide informational resources to other community-based providers, but it is not practical for the Center to provide the comprehensive range of services needed outside metro Atlanta. Substantial progress has been achieved in providing community-based specialized services to Shepherd Center’s target communities.



Community Health Need: Need for community care coordination and management professionals with an understanding of the unique pain management, behavioral adjustment and sexuality-related issues of individuals with ABI and SCI.

Description of Need

Many individuals who have sustained a brain injury or spinal cord injury have unique pain management, behavioral adjustment, and sexuality-related issues following their catastrophic injury that requires a specialized understanding and expertise in order to provide appropriate management and care coordination when these persons return to their local communities.

Objectives for Addressing Need

- *Increase awareness and understanding of the unique pain management, behavioral adjustment and sexuality-related issues of individuals with brain and spinal cord injuries.*
- *Provide access to community care coordination and management protocols resources developed by Shepherd Care.*
- *Provide telephone and internet-based peer support to local community care coordination and management professionals via Shepherd Care.*
- *Provide access to standards of care and treatment protocols for common secondary medical complications resulting from brain and spinal cord injury.*

Shepherd Center's Ongoing Programs/Services Addressing Need



Shepherd Care Program: *Shepherd Care provides case management for clients who have sustained a brain or spinal cord injury. The program was developed to assist individuals following discharge from the hospital, find a local primary care physician, become integrated into their local health delivery system, and make connections with local or telephone/internet-based peers to assist them in adjusting to community re-entry.*



Progress in Addressing Need

Shepherd Center provides case management for its clients for a limited period of time following discharge from the hospital. However, there continues to be a large unmet need for ongoing community care coordination and case management professionals who have an understanding of the unique issues that persons with ABI and SCI face upon returning to their local communities. Due to limited financial resources, minimal progress has been achieved in developing long-term community care coordination and case management professionals outside of Shepherd Center's local community.

Community Health Need: Need for enhanced community educational outreach on the prevention of primary injuries, secondary complications, appropriate standards of care, and aging related issues for individuals with brain and spinal cord injuries.

Description of Need

There is an ongoing need for community educational outreach on the prevention of primary injuries, secondary complications, appropriate standards of care, and aging related issues for individuals with brain and spinal cord injuries.

Objectives for Addressing Need

- *Provide educational programs addressing the impact of spinal cord and brain injury and injury prevention targeting the adolescent and young adult population, focusing on but not limited to preventable injuries involving diving, distracted driving, use of all-terrain vehicles, and unprotected extreme sport activities.*
- *Provide web-based education and information resources for patients, families, and healthcare professionals to enhance access to information related to prevention of injuries, physical care, secondary complications, appropriate standards of care, community re-entry, psychological and social adjustments, and aging related issues for individuals with brain and spinal cord injuries.*
- *Provide online information and continuing education courses for healthcare professionals on appropriate standards of care and secondary complications, psychological and social adjustment and aging related issues for their patients with brain and spinal cord injuries.*

Shepherd Center's Ongoing Programs/Services Addressing Need



YIPES! Program: *The Youth Injury Prevention Education program was launched by Shepherd Center to promote injury prevention and raise awareness of spinal cord and brain injuries among the adolescent population through peer social-networking applications and word of mouth. YIPES! focuses on, but is not limited to; injuries involving diving, distracted driving, all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) and unprotected extreme sport activities.*



Injury Prevention: *Shepherd Center has developed an education program addressing the impact of a spinal cord or brain injury and injury prevention for middle and high school students. Students enrolled in middle and high school can receive a three week educational series about brain and spinal cord anatomy and function, expected changes following injury, and injury prevention. The curriculum was developed by a team of clinicians and educators including physical and occupational therapists, speech and language pathologists, counselors, recreation therapy specialists, school teachers and hospital/school system administrators. The curriculum is interactive, including video case studies and school visitation with current and former patients who have a brain and/or spinal cord injury. Education sessions can improve a student's knowledge of the impact of a brain or spinal cord injury and change perceived attitudes about the risk of common behaviors. The program was available in eight local middle schools and eight local high schools in 2015.*

Shepherd Center employs a full time Director of Injury Prevention & Educational Services to promote our injury prevention message to more audiences.





My Vital Connections: is Shepherd Center's education and research portal for patients, families, and healthcare professionals. For patients and caregivers, access to information related to physical care, community re-entry and psychological and social adjustment are available through the Patients' link. For healthcare professionals, a variety of online information and continuing education courses are available through the Providers' link.



Progress in Addressing Need

Shepherd Center has a full-time Director of Injury Prevention and Education Services to continue to enhance community educational outreach on prevention of primary injuries and assist in developing educational offerings that describe secondary complications, appropriate standards of care, and aging related issues for persons with brain and spinal cord injuries. Continued development of podcasts has increased the number of specialized topics that are available for community educational outreach and has greatly expanded Shepherd Center's ability to reach larger audiences. Substantial progress has been achieved in enhancing community educational outreach within the local community.

Community Health Need: Need for telephone and/or web-based peer support systems for individuals with brain injuries, spinal cord injuries, and Multiple Sclerosis.

Description of Need

Persons who have sustained a brain injury, spinal cord injury, or have been diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis need peer support when they return to their local communities and move away from the peer support and encouragement they received while at Shepherd Center. Frequently, clients return to their home communities where they feel completely isolated and alone. By providing telephone and web-based peer support systems, these individuals can connect with others who understand their unique challenges and can offer practical and supportive assistance.

Objectives for Addressing Need

- *Provide peer connections to individuals who have been clients at Shepherd Center when they return to their home communities.*
- *Provide access to resources and options available to help individuals better address the psychological, educational, professional, and medical issues that may arise upon returning to their home community.*
- *Assist clients and family members/caregivers in becoming self-advocates for their needs within their local community.*

Shepherd Center's Ongoing Programs/Services Addressing Need



Shepherd Center Transition Support Program: *This program works to maximize client and family independence and autonomy by providing education, guidance and support upon discharge to home to improve health and safety outcomes. Clients entering the program will collaborate with a Transition Support Coordinator to achieve goals by:*

- *Moving toward optimal health, safety and wellness management*
- *Following discharge plan and home care instructions to prevent re-hospitalization*
- *Developing a client-centered treatment plan in the home*
- *Locating and utilizing appropriate community resources (financial, healthcare, wellness, etc.)*
- *Developing self-advocacy for medical, health and wellness needs.*



myShepherdConnection.org: *Is a web-based community access program designed to provide a broad range of educational tools to help patients and their caregivers following a brain injury, spinal cord injury or stroke. The web-based program has personal care manuals, caregiver guides, resources to assist in returning to the community, safe at home recommendations, and specific sections for brain injury, disorders of consciousness, stroke, spinal cord injury, and Multiple Sclerosis.*





Shepherd's Brain and Spinal Cord Injury Peer Support Program: *The Brain and Spinal Cord Injury Peer Support Program is designed to provide recently injured individuals with an opportunity to meet and talk with others who are successfully coping with a brain and/or spinal cord injury. These individuals have a wealth of information and experience to share with newly-injured patients.*

The program offers personal support and direct assistance to families living with brain and/or spinal cord injury. The program's personal support may involve discussing and sharing experiences on issues such as coping, attitudinal barriers, dating, body image, and sexual function. Assistance may involve providing specifics about community information, resources and services. Peer support meetings are regularly held each month at the Center and are open to the public.

- **Brain Injury Peer Visitors** (Peers meet individually with persons who have sustained a brain injury)
- **Spinal Cord Injury Support Group** (4th Thursday of every month 6:00-8:00 p.m.)
- **Spinal Cord Injury Caregivers Support Group** (4th Thursday of every month from 7:00 – 8:00 p.m.)
- **Spinal Cord Injury Support Group for Women** (4th Wednesday of every month from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.)
- **Hispanic Peer Support Group(Spinal Cord Injury)** Contact Peer Support
- **Brain and Spinal Cord Injury Support via Phone/Email** (If coming to Shepherd Center is not a possibility, the Brain and Spinal Cord Injury Peer Support Program can provide peer support over the phone or via email)



Shepherd Care Program: *Shepherd Care provides case management for clients who have sustained a brain or spinal cord injury. The program was developed to assist individuals following discharge from the hospital, find a local primary care physician, become integrated into their local health delivery system, and make connections with local or telephone/internet-based peers to assist them in adjusting to community re-entry.*



Progress in Addressing Need

With the development of the Transition Support Program and myShepherdCenter.org, Shepherd Center has significantly increased access to peer support connections and resource options for individuals with brain injuries, spinal cord injuries, or who have been diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis. However, there continues to be an ongoing community health need, especially for individuals who return to small, rural communities where they may experience significant feelings of isolation from friends and members within their local community. Overall, substantial progress has been achieved in addressing the need telephone and web-based peer support.

Community Health Need: Need for community-based exercise programs and facilities for individuals with brain injuries, spinal cord injuries, and Multiple Sclerosis.

Description of Need

Persons who have sustained brain injuries, spinal cord injuries, or who have Multiple Sclerosis need access to exercise programs and facilities to maintain optimal health and ensure that they maintain maximum functional independence.

Objectives for Addressing Need

- *Provide access to exercise equipment, pool and gymnasium for persons who have sustained a brain injury, spinal cord injury or have Multiple Sclerosis who live within the local community for a nominal monthly fee.*
- *With limited resources, it is not practical for the Shepherd Center to provide community-based exercise programs and facilities outside the local community.*

Shepherd Center's Ongoing Programs/Services Addressing Need



ProMotion Fitness Center: *The ProMotion Fitness Center is a community-wellness center, located at Shepherd Center, for people of all abilities. Facilities include a weight room, indoor track, full-court gymnasium, and swimming pool. Through classes, private lessons, or individual use of the facility, ProMotion attempts to improve its members' fitness and quality of life. The facility is completely accessible to allow people with physical disabilities to participate in all programs, as appropriate. Professionally trained and certified staff are available to ensure that all members receive the highest quality assistance.*



Eula C. & Andrew C. Carlos Multiple Sclerosis Rehabilitation and Wellness Program: *This program offers a comprehensive rehabilitation and wellness program with multiple program tracks for persons with MS and related diagnoses. Exercise classes include: core strengthening, lower extremity strengthening, cardio, yoga, aquatics, fine motor/cognitive group, sewing and bridge.*



Progress in Addressing Need

Shepherd Center offers community-based exercise programs and facilities for persons living in the local community with brain injuries, spinal cord injuries, and Multiple Sclerosis. However, there continues to be a significant unmet community need for these services in most other communities. Significant progress has been achieved in addressing this need for those for local residents who can access services at Shepherd Center.

APPENDIX: COMMUNITY INVENTORY - Healthcare Facilities & Resources Available to Respond to the Health Needs of the Brain Injury, Spinal Cord Injury, and Multiple Sclerosis Communities

ATLANTA REHABILITATION CENTERS FOR THE TREATMENT OF BRAIN INJURY, SPINAL CORD INJURY, AND MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

Shepherd Center

Consistently named one of America's best rehabilitation hospitals by *U.S. News & World Report*, the 152-bed Shepherd Center, located in Atlanta, specializes in the medical treatment, research, and rehabilitation of people with catastrophic injuries, including brain and/or spinal cord injury.

Shepherd focuses on highly individualized care, and their program turns out patients with some of the best long-term outcomes in the United States. Value-added services include: recreation therapy, patient outings, chaplaincy, assistive technology, peer support, back-to-school programs, and family programs. Specialized programs tailored to adolescents, patients with dual diagnoses (both brain and spinal cord injuries), patients on ventilators, and patients with low-level brain injuries are also available.

Shepherd Center is accredited by The Joint Commission (TJC), as well as the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF).

Emory University Hospital's Center for Rehabilitation Medicine

Located on the Emory University Hospital Campus in Atlanta, the Center for Rehabilitation Medicine is a 56-bed inpatient and outpatient facility that offers treatment for adult patients who have had a brain and/or spinal cord injury.

In addition to providing interdisciplinary care focused on helping patients return to their most independence. Emory's Center for Rehabilitation Medicine is also a teaching and research facility. Patients have access to a highly skilled and experienced staff, current, cutting-edge equipment, and a wide variety of specialty services.

Emory University Hospital's Center for Rehabilitation Medicine is accredited by The Joint Commission (TJC), as well as the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF).

Children's Healthcare of Atlanta

Children's Healthcare of Atlanta's, 28-bed rehabilitation facility is one of the largest pediatric inpatient rehabilitation facilities in the country providing treatment from birth to age 21.

The Brain Injury Program is designed to get patients to the functional level necessary to return home and to the community as quickly as possible. The program is designed specifically for patients experiencing difficulties as a result of a brain injury or other related neurological conditions.

Children, adolescents and teens with spinal cord injuries may need specialized rehabilitation so they can regain skills and abilities and address new problems from their injury. The Spinal Cord Injury Program is designed to help restore function to the highest possible level and help them become independent and return home.

Children's Healthcare of Atlanta's Rehabilitation Program is accredited by The Joint Commission (TJC), as well the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) with specialty recognition as a spinal cord system of care and pediatric specialty program.

Programs, Services, and Resources Available to Respond to the Needs of the Brain and Spinal Cord Injury Community (1)

(1) Source: "Go Ahead, Ask" published by the Brain & Spinal Injury Trust Fund Commission
Two Peachtree Street NW, Suite 26-426
Atlanta, Georgia 30303
(404) 651-5112 Info-bsitf@dhr.state.ga.us www.bsitf.state.ga.us



The Brain & Spinal Injury Trust Fund Commission enhances the lives of Georgians with traumatic brain and spinal cord injuries. Guided by the aspirations of people with traumatic injuries, The Commission supports lives of meaning, independence, and inclusion. As the state's Lead Agency on Traumatic Injuries, the BSITF:

- *Administers the Central Registry to identify those who are injured,*
- *Distributes resources through the Trust Fund, and*
- *Advocates for improvements in statewide services.*

ADVOCACY

Brain & Spinal Injury Trust Fund Commission: *By visiting www.bsitf.state.ga.us individuals can learn about local and federal advocacy initiatives for people with traumatic brain and spinal cord injuries.*

Brain Injury Association of Georgia: *A charitable organization working together with families and professionals in Georgia to provide education, advocacy and support for those affected by brain injury. Call to learn about local support groups.*

www.birf.info | 1441 Clifton Rd NE, #114-A, Atlanta, GA 30322 | (404) 712-5504

Brain Injury Association of America (BIAA): *Founded in 1980, the Brain Injury Association of America (BIAA) is the leading national organization serving and representing individuals, families and professionals who are touched by a life-altering, often devastating, traumatic brain injury.*

www.biausa.org | 8201 Greensboro Drive, Suite 611, McLean, VA 22102 | (800) 444-6443

Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation: *A non-profit foundation dedicated to curing spinal cord injury by funding innovative research, and improving the quality of life for people living with paralysis through grants, information and advocacy.*

www.christopherreeve.org | 636 Morris Turnpike, Suite 3A, Short Hills, NJ 07078 | (973) 379-2690

Georgia Advocacy Office: *A non-profit organization that provides advocacy to people with disabilities who have been abused or neglected, or who may need assistance in getting out of an institution.*

www.thegao.org | 150 E Ponce de Léon Ave., Suite 250, Decatur, GA 30030 | (800) 537-2329

Georgia Legal Services: *A non-profit organization that provides free legal services to low-income people in civil matters.* www.glsf.org | 104 Marietta St., Ste. 250, Atlanta, GA 30303 | (404) 206-5175

Let's Get Together: *For nearly 20 years, Let's Get Together Inc. (LGT) is a website that has been promoting the people and groups that are making a difference in the disability movement. Provides links to topics, events, blogs and newsletters.* www.lgtinc.org

The MS Life Center: *The MS life Center is the Georgia Chapter of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society and works to improve the quality of life for people affected by MS in the state of Georgia and raise funds for critical research.*

www.nationalmssociety.org | 950 East Paces Ferry Rd. NE, Suite 110, Atlanta, GA 30326 | (678) 672-1000

National Spinal Cord Injury Association (NSCIA): *A national non-profit organization that strives to provide individuals with spinal cord injuries with information and resources available that will help educate and empower them to maintain a higher level of independence, health and personal fulfillment.*

www.spinalcord.org | 6701 Democracy Blvd., #300-9, Bethesda, MD 20817 | (800) 962-9629

Parent to Parent of Georgia: *Parent to Parent provides support and information to parents of children with disabilities. In addition to other resources, parents are matched with a supporting parent based on the child's disability, health care need, or special concerns. Regional offices are listed on the website.*

www.parenttoparentofga.org | Central Office, 3805 Presidential Parkway, #207, Atlanta, GA 30340
(770) 451-5484 (800) 229-2038



Southeast Disability and Business Technical Assistance Center: *The southeast DBTAC promotes awareness about the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), accessible information technology (IT), and the rights and abilities of people with disabilities.*

www.sedbtac.org | Southeast DBTAC, 490 Tenth Street NW, Atlanta, Georgia 30318 | (800) 949-4232

State of Georgia ADA Coordinator's Office: *Provides comprehensive educational and technical support for State agencies so that those programs, services and activities operated by the State of Georgia are accessible and usable by everyone.*

www.state.ga.us/gsifc/ada | Mike Galifianakis, State ADA Coordinator's Office, c/o Georgia State Financing and Investment Commission, 270 Washington Street, 2nd Floor, Atlanta, Georgia 30334 | (404) 657-7313

Statewide Independent Living Council of GA, Inc.: *The SILC of Georgia is a nonprofit, non-governmental, consumer-controlled organization that provides disability information, financial support, and technical assistance to a network of seven Centers for Independent Living (CILs) located throughout the state.*

www.silcga.org | 1431-C McLendon Drive, Decatur, GA 30033 | (770) 270 -6860

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Friends of Disabled Adults and Children, Inc. (FODAC): *FODAC is a nonprofit organization that provides medical equipment to disabled people in the metro Atlanta area who could not otherwise afford it (they cannot ship items). FODAC serves metro Atlanta.*

4900 Lewis Rd, Stone Mountain, GA 30083 | (770) 491-9014

Tools for Life: *Tools for Life Assistive Technology Resource Centers (ATRCs) are "hands-on" learning centers for demonstration, education and evaluation of products available on the market today. They are also a resource for Georgians with disabilities, families, friends, health care professionals and other professionals who are interested in seeing, learning and experimenting with new and existing assistive technology.*

www.gatfl.org | Atlanta, Augusta, Macon, Conyers | (770) 934-8432

EDUCATION

Department of Labor Vocational Rehabilitation Services: *This organization can assist with paying for education.*

www.vocrehabga.org | vrpcustomer-service@dol.state.ga.us | (404) 657-2239 (866) 489-0001

Disability Services (for colleges): *Ask for more information at your college registrar's office.*

Georgia Department of Education (DOE): *To obtain information about parental rights for students receiving special education services, eligibility for services, and special education contact information for each county. The Georgia DOE serves students with disabilities from ages 3-22.*

www.doe.k12.ga.us/curriculum/exceptional/tbi.asp | 1870 Twin Towers East, Atlanta, GA 30334 | (404) 656-3963

Parents Educating Parents and Professionals (PEPP): *PEPP, Inc., a non-profit corporation dedicated to improving the quality of life and dreams for all families of children, youth, and adults with disabilities.*

www.peppinc.org | 3680 Kings Highway, Douglasville, GA 30135 | (770) 577-7771 (800) 322-7065

Parent Leadership Support Project of the Georgia Advocacy Office: *The goals of the Project are:*

- *To train advocates and enable Georgia parents of children with disabilities and other concerned citizens to master information, and negotiate systems in order to secure the educational opportunities that are mandated for children with disabilities;*
- *To support grassroots parent leadership efforts; and*
- *To sustain shared learning among advocates.*

150 E Ponce de Léon, Suite 250, Decatur, GA 30030 | (800) 537-2329

Parent to Parent of Georgia: *Parent to Parent provides support and information to parents of children with disabilities. In addition to other resources, parents are matched with a supporting parent based on the child's disability, health care need, or special concerns. Regional offices are listed on the website.*

www.parenttoparentofga.org 3805 Presidential Parkway, #207, Atlanta, GA 30340, (770) 451-5484 (800) 229-2038

EMOTIONS/BEHAVIOR

AgeWise Connection/Gateway: *AgeWise/Gateway Connection is a free Information and Referral Assistance program for older adults and people with disabilities. Trained professionals provide information about services from a vast database about programs appropriate for an individual's situation, including: housing options, in-home services, retirement planning, home-delivered meals, utility assistance, leisure and volunteer opportunities and much more.*

Atlanta Regional Commission, 40 Courtland Street NE, Atlanta, GA 30303

www.agewise.atlantaregional.com | aginginfo@atlantaregional.com | (404) 463-3333 (800) 767-2433

Brain Injury Association of Georgia: *A non-profit charitable organization working together with families and professionals in Georgia to provide education, advocacy and support for those affected by brain injury. Call to learn about local support groups.*

www.birf.info | 1441 Clifton Rd NE #114-A, Atlanta, GA 30322 | (404) 712-5504

EMPLOYMENT

Benefits Navigator: *This service provides comprehensive benefits counseling to people (ages 14-65, including transitional teenagers) who are eligible for Social Security, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) to understand the impact working (earning income) will have on their benefits.*

www.bpaoga.com | Shepherd Center: 2020 Peachtree Road, Atlanta, GA 30309

Sally Atwell: (404) 350-7589; Curtis Rogers: (404) 350-7598 | (866) 772-2726

Department of Labor Vocational Rehabilitation Services: *Assists people with disabilities to secure jobs, vocational counseling and training, job development, and funding for goods and services that are related to returning to work, after becoming disabled. Services include, but are not limited to: home modifications, education, vehicle modifications, computers, assistive technology, and job coaching.*

www.vocrehabga.org | vrpcustomer-service@dol.state.ga.us | (404) 657-2239 (866) 489-0001

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE/BENEFITS

Brain & Spinal Injury Trust Fund Commission: *The trust fund provides funding for services and items that will improve the quality of life, increase independence, and allow inclusion in the community for individuals with traumatic brain and spinal cord injuries (priority given to those in at-risk situations).*

www.bsitf.state.ga.us | 2 Peachtree St., NW, Ste.26-426, Atlanta, GA 30303 | (888) 233-5760

Credit-Able/Getting Ahead Association: *This organization provides guaranteed loans for assistive technology, home and vehicle modifications to Georgians with disabilities, their families, care-givers, and/or employers.*

www.gatfl.org | (800) 497-8665

Georgia Department of Labor/VR Tools for Life Program: 1700 Century Circle, B-4, Atlanta, GA 30345

FINANCIAL

Georgia Partnership for Caring: *Assists uninsured residents of Georgia with non-emergency health care assistance and prescription assistance.*

www.gacares.org | P.O. Box 450987, Atlanta, GA 31145-0987 | (678) 578-2920 (800) 982-7468

Medicaid: *Provides medical assistance (doctors, pharmacists, and hospitals) to people who can't afford to pay for some or all of their medical bills.* www.dch.state.ga.us | call to find your local office: (800) 282-4536

Medicare: *Provides health insurance (hospital and doctor's services) to people 65 years of age and older, and some disabled people under 65 years of age (eligibility begins two years after date of injury).*

www.medicare.org | call to find your local office: (800) 669-8387

Social Security Administration: *Provides cash benefits to people who have worked and have become disabled. This entitlement program ensures that citizens with disabilities receive benefits from this program.*

www.ssa.gov | call to find your area call: (800) 772-1213



HOUSING

AARP: www.aarp.org/families/home_design/

Department of Community Affairs: *The Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) operates a host of state and federal grant programs including Section 8.*

www.dca.state.ga.us | 60 Executive Park South NE, Atlanta, Georgia 30329 | (404) 679-4940 (800) 359-4663

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD): *Homeownership Centers insure single-family FHA mortgages and oversees the selling of HUD homes.*

Five Points Plaza Building: 40 Marietta Street, Atlanta, GA 30303 | (800) 767-4483 (404) 331-5001

Georgia Housing Search: www.georgiahousingsearch.org

National Association of Home Builders: www.nahb.org/directory.aspx?sectionID=686&directoryID=188

MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

Friends of Disabled Adults and Children, Inc. (FODAC): *A non-profit organization that exists to provide medical equipment to disabled people in the metro Atlanta area who could not otherwise afford it (they cannot ship items).*

www.fodac.org | 4900 Lewis Road, Stone Mountain, GA 30083 Mike Maijala: mmajjala@fodac.org | (770) 491-9014

PERSONAL SUPPORT/HOME & COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES:

Community Care Services Program: *Provides in-home and community-based services for people who are elderly or are otherwise functionally impaired or disabled. Funding provides in-home care for those who would otherwise receive services in an institution such as a nursing facility, personal care home or group home. CCSP program provides an average of 3-5 personal support hours per day. CCSP serves all areas.*

www.northwestga-aaa.org | Area Agency on Aging: PO Box 1793, Rome, GA 30162 | (800) 759-2963

Independent Care: *Offers services that help a limited number of adult Medicaid recipients with physical and cognitive disabilities live in their own homes or in the community instead of an institution such as a nursing home. There is a waiting list for services. Independent care provides an average of 6-10 hours per day of in-home care.*

www.ghp.georgia.gov, GA Health Partnerships: 1455 Lincoln Parkway, Suite 800, Atlanta, GA 30346 (800) 982-0411 Ext. 3632 or 3601 or 3643 or 3403

SOURCE (Service Options Using Resources in Community):

SOURCE offers services to adult SSI recipients with physical disabilities in order for them to live in their own homes instead of in an institution such as a nursing home. There is no waiting list for services.

Emory Healthcare (call for regional offices) 1841 Clifton Road NE, Atlanta, GA 30329 (404) 728-6555

Spinal Cord Injury Information Network:

www.spinalcord.uab.edu/show.asp?durki=22411

Suite 101 (Articles on Disabilities):

http://disabilities.suite101.com/article.cfm/personal_care_attendants_part_1

PRESCRIPTION ASSISTANCE

Eli Lilly: *Lilly Answers is a patient assistance program for low-income Medicare enrollees who do not have prescription drug coverage. The Lilly Answers card allows people with disabilities under Medicare to pay a \$12 fee for a 30-day supply of certain retail-distributed Lilly drugs.*

www.lillyanswers.com | Eli Lilly and Company, Lilly Answers, PO Box 219296, Kansas City, MO, 64121 | (877) 795-4559

Free Meds and Solutions: *This organization's website offers applications to apply to 170+ programs offering 1,000+ brand name drugs. If you don't have Internet access, call their toll-free number for assistance.*

www.freemedandsolutions.com | Med Solutions, 422 Waiialae Ave., #373 Honolulu, HI 96816-5330 | (877) 354-6337

Georgia Cares: *Provides seniors and people with disabilities information about prescription drug assistance, Medicare, Medicaid, Medicare Supplemental Insurance (MediGap) and other health insurance issues. Serves Chattahoochee, Clay, Crisp, Dooly, Harris, Macon, Marion, Muscogee, Quitman, Randolph, Schley, Stewart, Sumter, Talbot, Taylor, and Webster Counties.* www.lcrdcaa.org | 1428 Second Ave, PO Box 1908, Columbus, Ga. 31902 | (800) 249-7468

Medicare: *This website offers information about public and private programs that offer discounted or free medication, programs that help with other health care costs, and Medicare health plans that include prescription coverage.*

www.medicare.org | call to find your local office: (800) 669-8387

Pfizer Pharmaceutical Company: *Through Sharing the Care, Pfizer donates most of its advanced medicines to low-income, uninsured patients through a network of 380 community, migrant and homeless health centers across the country. Serves Wrightsville, Atlanta, and Savannah.*

www.sharingthecare.com | (800) 984-1500

PhRMA-Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers Association: *Helping patients bring together pharmaceutical companies, doctors, patient advocacy organizations and civic groups to help low-income, uninsured patients get free or nearly free, brand-name medicines. This site provides access to 275+ public and private assistance companies, including 150+ programs offered by pharmaceutical companies.*

www.helpingpatients.org | (888) 477-2669

TRANSPORTATION – USED/DISCOUNT VEHICLE SALES

Disabled Dealer Magazine: *A magazine published monthly that offers a variety of vehicles for sale. The magazine serves the southeastern states.*

www.disableddealer.com | southeast@disableddealer.com | 2391 Leisure Lake Drive, Atlanta, GA 30338 (770) 457-9697

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www.fodac.org | 4900 Lewis Road, Stone Mountain, GA 30083 | Mike Maijala: mmaijala@fodac.org (770) 491-9014

National Mobility Equipment Dealers Association: *NMEDA, a non-profit trade association of mobility equipment dealers, driver rehabilitation specialists, and other professionals helping people with disabilities to drive or be transported in vehicles modified with mobility equipment. Its Quality Assurance Program (QAP) is the recognized accreditation program for the mobility equipment industry.*

www.nmeda.org | 3327 W. Bears Ave., Tampa, Florida 33618 | (800) 833-0427

Georgia Department of Transportation: *Information about Georgia's transit system.*

www.dot.state.ga.us | No. 2 Capitol Square, SW, Atlanta, Georgia 30334 | (404) 656-5267

Easter Seals, Project ACTION (Accessible Community Transportation in our Nation): *Easter Seals Project ACTION promotes cooperation between the transportation industry and the disability community to increase mobility for people with disabilities under the ADA and beyond. Extensive resources include: hotline, in-depth website, training and technical assistance.*

www.projectaction.easterseals.com | 1425 K Street, NW, Suite 200, Washington, DC 20005 | (800) 659-6428

FOR INFORMATION ON ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS, SERVICES, AND RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO RESPOND TO THE NEEDS OF THE BRAIN AND SPINAL CORD INJURY COMMUNITY, CONTACT:





Shepherd Center is the nation's largest not-for-profit hospital specializing in research, medical care, rehabilitation, and advocacy for people with spinal cord injury and disease, acquired brain injury, Multiple Sclerosis, chronic pain, and other neuromuscular problems. For more information and a virtual tour, please visit www.shepherd.org



Shepherd Center

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