



## PATIENT AND FAMILY EDUCATION AT SHEPHERD CENTER *The Key to Independence*

**T**hough you and your family may be facing a challenging journey in the months and years ahead, the key to independence after a spinal cord or brain injury is knowledge. To help you prepare, Shepherd Center offers a comprehensive training program.

The purpose of the patient and family/caregiver education and training program is to help you and your family members or loved ones learn:

- about the injury or condition
- about what you need to do to prepare for discharge from the rehabilitation hospital
- how to solve problems that you may encounter after discharge

The training is interactive and is presented in a variety of ways, including small group classes, hands-on training sessions and problem solving sessions. Computer-based sessions and videotapes are also available for those interested.

To be successful, you and your family member or caregiver must be an active participant in this process. You are the key to a successful family training experience.

### WHAT WILL HAPPEN DURING THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROCESS?

When you are admitted to Shepherd Center, you will be assigned a case manager. He or she will be one of the most important members of your team and will be the person contacting you about education and training needs.

It is important to identify a primary caregiver as soon as possible. The primary caregiver should be the person who will usually be the one to help out at home. This person needs to complete all of the training and education. You may also be asked to have a back-up caregiver. Additional family members may attend training as space allows.

The average caregiver attends three to five days of training and education classes. If you have more complicated

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needs, your caregiver may need more advanced training or additional sessions. Examples of when training may be extended include situations where you may need a device to help you breathe, (ventilator) or if you are admitted to our pre-rehabilitation education program (PREP).

One of the best ways to learn something new is to practice. Your caregiver may be asked to take care of you overnight, over a weekend, or for a day. This may happen at Shepherd Center or at another location outside the Center to practice what you have learned. After the practice session, you and a staff member will decide together if more training is needed.

## WHAT TO DO NOW?

- Decide who will be the primary caregiver.
- Have your caregiver think about how they like to learn something new and let them start asking questions.
- Think about what obstacles your caregiver might have that will keep him or her from attending training sessions (work schedules, travel problems other responsibilities at home, etc.)
- Be ready to discuss those obstacles with your case manager so they can help you find a solution.

Remember, you play a key role in successful patient and family training.

If you would like additional information about the training and education program prior to arriving at Shepherd Center, please contact your clinical evaluator.

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## SHEPHERD CENTER IS:

- The largest freestanding hospital in the country devoted to the medical care and rehabilitation of people with spinal cord injury and disease, acquired brain injury, multiple sclerosis and other neuromuscular problems.
- A Spinal Cord Injury Model Center designated by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research.
- Accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO).

## IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Main switchboard:	404-352-2020
Admissions:	1-800-SHEPHERD or 404-350-7345

Visit Shepherd Center online at [www.shepherd.org](http://www.shepherd.org)