MedStar National Rehabilitation Network
Volunteer Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) Peer Mentorship Program

What Is A Peer Mentor?

The word “peer” simply means someone who is similar to you be it in age, gender, race, education, or disability. “Mentoring” simply means serving as a trusted counselor or teacher. A peer mentor is someone who has a spinal cord injury (SCI), is living successfully with it, and wants to help others in similar situations. A peer mentor is not a replacement for health care professionals, but they can be a valuable resource.

Peer mentors assist individuals who are newly injured or diagnosed with a SCI in a variety of ways such as:

- Sharing thoughts and experiences about SCI;
- Coping with SCI;
- Discussing ways to prevent medical complications;
- Assisting others in living a healthy, active life.

Levels of Mentorships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCI Peer Mentors</th>
<th>SCI Peer Visitors</th>
<th>SCI Peer Pen/Phone Pals</th>
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<td>A SCI Peer Mentor is a formal mentor relationship consisting of a newly diagnosed person and an individual who has been living with SCI for a longer period of time. The relationship involves one-on-one meetings, outings, as well as correspondence via phone and e-mail for a pre-determined length of time.</td>
<td>A visitor consists of a one-time visit between an individual in acute rehabilitation and a volunteer living with SCI. These visits are facilitated and supervised by the Care Coordination and Therapeutic Recreation departments.</td>
<td>The SCI Peer Pen Pal program was developed as a partner to the Peer Mentor Program. Recognizing that people have busy lives and many commitments, the pen/phone pal program gives individuals with SCI an option to have support by phone and e-mail as opposed to face-to-face meetings.</td>
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How Do I Get Involved?

To become a volunteer mentor, please fill out the volunteer information sheet and return it to the therapeutic recreation department, or contact one of the individuals listed below. A representative from MedStar National Rehabilitation Hospital will be in touch with you. Thank you again for your interest and feel free to contact us with any questions!

For more information, please contact:

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