Ventilator Care

Occasionally, a rehabilitation patient requires ventilator support. Ventilated patients are admitted with the intention of either weaning from the ventilator and/or training the patient and family to care for the ventilator patient at home. A coordinated team approach is utilized to provide the appropriate care, rehabilitation and teaching to afford the patient the most productive lifestyle possible, including:

- A highly skilled group of professionals who plan the patient’s care under the direction of a rehabilitation physician (physiatrist) from MedStar National Rehabilitation Network. A physician is available at all times.
- On-site respiratory therapists who monitor each ventilator-dependent patient and assist with gradual ventilator weaning
- Pulmonologists who are available for consultation at all times with the ability to provide intensive care, if necessary
- Therapies that are specifically designed to help the patient regain functional control of daily activities or mobility, or to learn to direct their care
- Speech/language pathologists who assist the individual with having an effective method of communication along with evaluating and treating swallowing issues.
- Skilled rehabilitation nurses who provide 24-hour care, managing the ventilator, assisting with weaning, teaching, and training the patient and his/her family.
- Care, which is coordinated by a case manager who helps the patient and family understand the recovery process and consider the options as the patient progresses from inpatient care to the next level of care (subacute rehabilitation, home health care, outpatient rehabilitation, and/or community services)

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Our clinical staff works together as an interdisciplinary team to design a unique rehabilitation program for each patient. The team helps patients attain their highest level of function and independence.

Core goals of rehabilitation are to:

• Involve the patient and his/her family in the development of realistic rehabilitation goals and participate in discharge planning
• Increase the patient’s overall strength, endurance, flexibility, and range of motion
• Instruct the patient and his/her family in proper skin care techniques, as well as build the patient’s tolerance for sitting and lying down
• Assist ventilator patients with breathing and speech techniques to maximize their independence
• Determine adaptive equipment needs and custom-fitting braces, orthotics and wheelchairs
• Help patients and their loved ones adjust to the disability and learn to cope with the physical limitations that accompany spinal cord injuries
• Coordinate additional therapies and community resources, as needed

Referral and Admission

Prior to admission, patients who are referred to CIIRP are evaluated by an admissions liaison to determine if they can benefit from intensive rehabilitation services.

Specifically, patients should:

• Be medically stable and able to participate in and benefit from an intensive, structured rehabilitation program.
• Be limited in mobility, self care and/or the ability to function independently in a safe manner.
• Have plans upon discharge from the program.

Insurance and Financial Arrangements

The admission process includes verifying insurance and obtaining precertification and authorization to treat prior to admission. In cases where insurance and personal resources are insufficient to meet anticipated expenses, we will counsel patients and families with regard to their financial situation.