

SCRIPT-BROADCAST Transitional Rehab Helps Healing Close to Home

As the silver tsunami hits, Baby Boomers are finding themselves getting their hips and knees replaced and planning other elective but necessary surgeries. A new approach to rehab following surgery offers another alternative for skilled nursing care and therapy outside of a nursing home and patients are loving the option.

Someone who regularly hears that positive feedback is OSF Saint Luke Inpatient Care Director Lisa Garcia. She says so called “swing bed” service allows hospitals, particularly those in rural areas, to use beds for rehabilitation when acute care is no longer needed.

It can be very helpful for a patient who no longer needs acute care but who isn’t ready to go home.

SOT: Lisa Garcia, RN, Director of Inpatient Services OSF HealthCare Saint Luke Medical Center in Kewanee

“We help them by providing services they’re going to need such as skilled occupational therapy, physical therapy. Some of those people require antibiotics afterwards so we give them IV therapy as well, wound care – any skilled services they might need before they can transition to home.” (:17)

Medicare and most private insurers cover extended care services furnished in a swing bed hospital but it does require a physician’s order and insurance pre-certification. The staff at OSF HealthCare facilities can help with the screening process.

The in-hospital rehab is not only for patients who have had surgery. Garcia says it can help newly diagnosed diabetics who have had a blood-sugar related episode or older patients who have fallen and need to improve balance or to build up their strength.

SOT: Lisa Garcia, RN, Director of Inpatient Services OSF HealthCare Saint Luke Medical Center

She cites as an example, **“Somebody who maybe has been in and out of the hospital or who has been home but not really being as active as they could be – that we can actually help get them back to their prior level and get them back home and independent.” (:10)**

The average length of stay for a swing bed patient is seven to 10 days, depending on the extent of therapy and sometimes education that is required.

Garcia points out that a patient could have had surgery or been hospitalized elsewhere and transfer to receive the inpatient therapy and specialized care offered at an OSF Healthcare hospital with a swing bed program.

SOT-Seventy-nine year old Accident Victim Paul Schauble of Kewanee, swing bed patient

Seventy-nine year old Paul Schauble is an OSF patient who had surgery at other OSF hospital but returned closer to home.

“They talk about American exceptionalism ... I found that three miles away from my home, right here!”(:05)

Schauble of Kewanee became a swing bed patient following an accident in which he was dragged down his driveway by his own pick-up truck May 29. He hadn't quite put the truck in park but had opened the door when one of his two dogs jumped out. The animal's leash was still around Schauble's hand and it caught the front wheel.

Schauble was airlifted to OSF HealthCare Saint Francis Medical Center in Peoria and underwent surgery for multiple injuries.

Fifteen days later, Schauble was back at OSF Saint Luke Medical Center in Kewanee where he could receive therapy and recover close to home.

Schauble had a private room and was comforted and felt secure seeing familiar faces every day.

SOT-Seventy-nine year old Accident Victim Paul Schauble of Kewanee, swing bed patient

“Familiarity to somebody that’s really hurt bad means a lot. It does. It means a great lot. Does it work? Yes it does ok? I’m living proof of that” (:06)

Schauble is feeling better with a new lease on life. He now receives daily outpatient therapy and looks forward to every day.

“My heroes work at Saint Luke!” he said as tears welled but didn't quite fall from his eyes.

OSF HealthCare suggests if you are planning an elective surgery or wondering how you'll transition home following a hospital stay to ask your provider or discharge planner if the OSF swing bed option is available and appropriate for you.

Swing Bed Programs are currently available at these OSF HealthCare Hospitals

OSF Saint Paul Medical Center in Escanaba, Michigan

OSF Saint James Hospital in Pontiac

OSF Saint Luke Medical Center in Kewanee

OSF Holy Family Medical Center in Monmouth

OSF Saint Paul Medical Center in Mendota