

BROADCAST-Hospital Stay with Rehab Offers Healing Close to Home

As many Baby Boomer get knees and hips replaced or for people who don't have the kind of help they need at home after surgery, there's an alternative to a nursing home stay for rehab.

OSF HealthCare Saint Luke Inpatient Care Director Lisa Garcia says so called "swing bed" service allows hospitals, particularly those in rural areas, to use beds for rehabilitation when a patient no longer needs intense care but who isn't ready to go home.

SOT-OSF HealthCare Saint Luke Inpatient Care Director Lisa Garcia

"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." (:10)

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-OSF HealthCare Saint Luke Inpatient Care Director Lisa Garcia

"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."

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 stresses patients enjoy the swing bed program because they receive the same level of expert care they know and trust. Seventy-nine year old Paul Schauble had just that kind of experience.

SOT-In-Hospital Rehab Patient Paul Schauble

"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 50 feet down his driveway by his own pick-up truck. 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. He did have some pain and so he enjoyed the ability to stay in a private room, seeing familiar faces, and receiving therapy from the hospital's inpatient therapy gym

SOT-In-Hospital Rehab Patient Paul Schauble

"Familiarity to somebody that's really hurt bad means a lot. It does. It means a great lot," he said choking back tears. "Does it work? Yes it does ok? I'm living proof of that!" (:09)

Now fully recovered and doing well back at home, Schauble recently dropped by the hospital just to say hi to his care team which he credits with going above and beyond to heal him physically and to lift him emotionally when he needed it most.

*** FOR WEB

Planning an elective surgery or wondering how you'll transition home following a hospital stay? 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 Luke Medical Center in Kewanee, Illinois

OSF Holy Family Medical Center in Monmouth, Illinois

OSF Saint Paul Medical Center in Mendota, Illinois

OSF Saint Francis Medical Center in Escanaba, Michigan