



Christina Sansei hugs therapy tech Yasira Hatter as the two meet at the ninth annual Spring Rehabilitation Patient Reunion. The event brought caregivers together with their former patients. Patients came to the lectern to tell their stories, for Sansei it was only a few weeks since she started walking again after a motorcycle crash.

Patients share their successes at Rehab Reunion

Christina Sansei was severely injured during a motorcycle crash earlier this year. She spent six and a half weeks in the Trauma Center and then transferred to inpatient rehabilitation.

“I was nervous and didn’t know what to expect,” said

Sansei of her rehabilitation experience. “I was almost completely immobile at the time. They gave me a lot of confidence. They are an awesome support team.”

Sansei was discharged home and began walking again. She was among other rehabilitation patients who

gathered to celebrate their successes and reunite with their therapists and caregivers during the ninth annual Spring Rehabilitation Reunion held in April.

Former patient Dena Dipolito also praised the rehabilitation team and her therapists, David Cunningham and Ashley Burnett. “Without them I wouldn’t be standing here,” she said.

“This place is so close to my heart. The nurses are exemplary . . . they were all kind and wonderful. They always had smiles on their faces. Everybody helped me,” she said.

“I’m proud to be a graduate of Tampa General’s Rehab. I’m grateful for having been here.” **EM**



Lance Briggs shows off the fact that he can move and lift his leg – something others predicted would never happen.

Rehabilitation patients create art as part of therapy

Rehabilitation Center patients tapped their creative juices to make artwork that resembles stained glass.

The class was taught by University of Tampa (UT) art therapy students as part of the Healing Environment through Art (HEArt) program. In its sixth year, the program is a joint effort between the Rehabilitation Center and UT's Art Therapy Program. The goal is to introduce art creation as a form of therapeutic relaxation, said Seema Weinstein, Ph.D., manager of the hospital's Psychology-Neuropsychology Services.

Participants mixed food coloring with decoupage glue and then painted it on clear acrylic squares. Their final pieces reflect light and look similar to stained glass.



University of Tampa professor Merrilee Jom shows a patient what his painting looks like when lifted to the window.

"The colors and patterns reflect the challenges and beauty in gaining perspective on viewing new aspects in life," Weinstein said. Creating the pieces provided patients the opportunity to regain independence, control, and autonomy, she said.

Some of the patients donated their artwork for display in the Rehabilitation Center to help promote an environment of healing, Weinstein said. [EM](#)



University of Tampa student Estefania Vargas, left, chats with Reeca Pastor as she paints.

Rehabilitation Center achieves high scores in new report

The Rehabilitation Center showed a low rate of acquired medical conditions among Medicare inpatients between the third quarter 2015 and second quarter 2016, according to a new report from the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), the agency that operates Medicare.

The report is part of CMS' commitment to improving the quality outcomes at inpatient rehabilitation facilities, long-term care hospitals and other facilities. CMS created an IRF Compare Site late last year so providers and the public can view current quality ratings of facilities and compare them to other local facilities and national averages.

TGH's Rehabilitation Center achieved high scores. While the national average for new or worsened pressure ulcers among Medicare inpatients in rehabilitation facilities was 0.7 percent, the Rehabilitation Center scored well below that at 0.1 percent. The center also earned a "better than the national rate" score for the number of unplanned readmissions among Medicare inpatients. The national average in that category is 13.06 percent. While the national average for Medicare inpatients with catheter-associated urinary tract infections was 0.937 percent, none of the Rehabilitation Center's

Medicare inpatients developed the infection during the report's time period.

"The CMS criteria for a patient to be admitted to an acute inpatient rehab facility (Acute IRF) is very stringent," said Michael Daniels, director of Rehabilitation Services.

The report also includes the number and conditions of Medicare inpatients treated at the Rehabilitation Center during the third quarter 2015 and second quarter 2016. They are:

- 99 with stroke
- 178 with nervous system disorders (excluding stroke)
- 81 with non-traumatic brain disease or conditions
- 34 with traumatic brain injuries
- 40 with non-traumatic spinal cord disease or conditions
- Less than 11 with traumatic spinal cord injuries
- 52 with hip or femur fractures
- 118 with hip or knee replacements, amputations or other bone joint conditions
- 36 with other conditions [EM](#)

Support groups at the Rehabilitation Center

The Rehabilitation Center offers these monthly support groups:

- **Stroke Support Group:** Held the first Wednesday of every month from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. in the Rehabilitation Center in Room 200 or Room 201. Contact Ann Laplaca at (813) 844-3541.

- **Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) Support Group:** Held the second Wednesday of the month in from 4:30 p.m. to 6 p.m. in the Rehabilitation Center, Room 200. Contact Justin Stark at (813) 844-4711 for more information.

- **Brain Injury (BI) Support Group:** Held the third Wednesday of the month from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. in the Rehabilitation Center, Room 201. Contact Pam Johnson at (813) 844-4531 for more information. [EM](#)

New rehabilitation equipment helps patients walk

Rehabilitation Services has new RoWalker therapy equipment that helps patients walk following surgery or injuries. The purchase was possible thanks to a donation of \$24,000 from proceeds raised during the Tampa General Hospital Foundation's 2016 Golf Tournament.

The RoWalker includes a fold down seat that allows patients to stop and rest if they get tired or start to fall. It also includes knee pads that help prevent them from falling. Patients can also be easily transferred from a chair to the walker thanks to its expandable legs that fit around a chair.

"To get a patient to walk they have to have confidence," said Physical Therapist Sharmila Gupte. "For patients with low endurance this is the ideal thing."

The Foundation recently launched a campaign to raise \$550,000 to buy four more pieces of advanced rehabilitation equipment for children and adults through its new Rehabilitation Equipment and Technology Fund. Donations from employees, the Foundation's board, and physicians have already totaled more than \$123,000, said Craig Moran, the Foundation's director of Development and Major Gifts. For more information or to make a donation, contact Moran at cmoran@tgh.org, or call (813) 844-8516. [EM](#)



Occupational Therapist Assistant Marie Baumrucker, right, and Respiratory Care Professional 2, Cheryl Penn, help patient Matthew Rocco as he uses one of the RoWalkers to walk down the hallway. The walker is equipped with a built-in seat if patients need to take a break or be wheeled back to their room.



Reunion Photos, Continued from page 1



The event brought caregivers together with their former patients.

Steve Lind tells the audience about his experience in rehab as Jennifer Carotenuto, manager of Inpatient Rehabilitation Services, stands by.

Rehab Matters is published by Tampa General Rehabilitation Services for its patients and other stakeholders.

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About Tampa General Hospital Rehabilitation Services

Rehabilitation Services at Tampa General Hospital is accredited by the Commission for Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) for the following:

- Comprehensive Integrated Inpatient Rehabilitation – Adult and Pediatric Rehabilitation Patients

Rehabilitation Services is also designated by the Florida Department of Health as a provider of services to both adult and pediatric Brain and Spinal Cord Injury Program (BSCIP) patients. Our services are accredited by The Joint Commission, and TGH is proud to be a Magnet hospital.

In addition to inpatient programs, the continuum of care includes services provided by hospital-based rehabilitation therapists, outpatient rehabilitation services, and physician services for new and follow-up patients in the Rehabilitation Medical Clinics.



REHABILITATION SERVICES

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