

Advances in [rehab]

How Driver Evaluation Programs Help Keep Us Safe on the Road

Driving is a symbol of freedom, of independence – of American tradition. While it's a skill that seems like second nature to most of us, driving becomes increasingly difficult and dangerous as we age. In fact, most of us will outlive our ability to drive safely by 7 to 10 years. With accidents caused by unsafe driving in the news every day, it's more important than ever to make sure your driving skills are sharp.

You can start by consulting your family physician to make sure your skills are where they should be. In many cases, a Driving Evaluation Program can be the best way to determine if it is safe to drive.

When choosing a program, you'll want to make sure you select one that is run by an occupational therapist, and also includes a Certified Driving Instructor. A physician referral is required to start a Driving Evaluation Program, which most often includes two parts: a clinical portion and a road portion. The clinical portion typically involves an hour-long evaluation with the occupational therapist, the results of which may result in the following recommendations to your referring physician:

- Continue the program with the road evaluation
- Complete further therapy
- Review the RMV Driver's Manual
- Consider an eye exam
- Refrain from driving

A road evaluation is usually done on a separate day, and conducted by both the occupational therapist and a Certified Driving Instructor. As you maneuver the Driving Instructor's car, the evaluators will be looking at safety, judgment, problem solving, and awareness in your driving. Recommendations following the road evaluation may include:

- Resume driving with a valid license
- Practice with a licensed driver
- Lessons with a Certified Driving Instructor
- Competency test at the Registry of Motor Vehicles
- Refrain from driving



Below are some helpful websites where you can find self-assessment tools and guides for safe driving.

- AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety: www.seniordrivers.org
- AARP: www.aarp.org
- Local AAA Office: www.aaa.com
- Hartford Insurance Company: www.thehartford.com/alzheimers and www.thehartford.com/talkwitholderdrivers
- AOTA (American Occupational Therapy Association): www.aota.org/olderdriver
- Registry of Motor Vehicles: www.mass.gov/rmv and select "mature drivers"
- Alzheimer's Association: www.alzmass.org

Following the Driving Evaluation, a summary of findings and recommendations is sent to your referring physician, to include a clearance to drive, as appropriate.

Unfortunately, most insurance companies do not cover a Driver Evaluation Program. Costs for the entire Program usually range from \$300 to \$450 and above. However, it's a small price to pay for the confidence you'll gain, knowing you're doing your part to keep yourself and your fellow drivers safe.

Braintree and New England Rehab Hospitals each offer a Driver Evaluation Program. For more information, please visit our websites or call our Outpatient Centers: 781-348-4017 (Braintree Rehab) and 781-939-1900, ext. 1601 (New England Rehab).

Your
[rehab]
at

Braintree Rehabilitation

RENOVATIONS AT BRAINTREE REHABILITATION HOSPITAL

Our therapeutic patio is now complete, and this, along with our new employee patio, hospital-wide WiFi, and new state-of-the-art equipment, marks phase one of a multi-phase plan to upgrade our facility.

Phase two will begin in April and include upgraded rooms and nurses stations, wide screen TVs, climate control upgrades in patient rooms, entrance and lobby renovations, and new outpatient equipment.

Look for your invitation to our ribbon-cutting and homecoming event scheduled for this fall!

EVENTS, SUPPORT GROUPS, AND FUNDRAISERS

WELLNESS WRAP-UP

"Reaching Out to the Community with Information"

A partnership of South Shore Senior News and Braintree Rehabilitation Hospital will host a series of luncheon seminars providing the latest news on health and wellness. Join us the third Wednesday of each month from 11:30am-1:00pm.

Please RSVP by calling
781-348-2107.

LIVING WITH BETTER HEARING: DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT

May 21st

Learn how the latest technology can help you hear better.

A JOVIAL LOOK AT AGING

June 18th

Join us as we discuss the aging process and learn steps you can take to age healthy.

[rehab]

Check-up

How to Select an Outpatient Therapy Provider Who Specializes in Neurological Rehabilitation

When selecting an outpatient therapy provider following a neurological injury, illness or surgery it is important to consider experience and expertise. Many hospital-based and private practice therapy providers specialize in orthopedic rehabilitation and have limited experience treating neurologically impaired patients.

The outpatient clinics of Braintree Rehabilitation Hospital and New England Rehabilitation Hospital have the expertise, experience and technology to utilize every opportunity to improve the quality of life for patients with a wide variety of illness and injuries, including:

- Stroke
- Brain Injury
- Spinal Cord Injury
- Multiple Sclerosis
- Parkinson's Disease
- Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS)
- Meniere's Disease
- Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo
- Cerebellar Ataxia
- Guillain-Barré Syndrome
- Other Central Nervous System Disorders

Our staff physical therapists, occupational therapists, and speech-language pathologists specialize in neuro-rehabilitation and are uniquely qualified with the training, strategies, manual skills and intuition required to develop and provide effective therapy programs. Simply stated, we offer a team of therapists whose primary focus is the treatment of patients with neurological illness and injuries.

Our outpatient neuro-rehab programs are delivered in a multi-disciplinary team approach. In this approach the physical therapist, occupational therapist, speech-language pathologist, assistants and a case manager all meet on a regular basis to discuss goals, treatment plans and coordinate activities of daily living skills training within the team. Case managers offer



expertise in helping the team and the patient coordinate insurance and community resources to the benefit of the patient and family.

Recent advances in technology have revolutionized the treatment approach, improved the speed of recovery and outcomes. Braintree and New England Rehabilitation Hospitals are proud to offer the latest in rehabilitative technology to our patients, including:

- **The AutoAmbulator:** A sophisticated robotic treadmill device that helps patients replicate normal walking patterns
- **Bioness® H200™:** An advanced therapy system that uses electrical stimulation to improve hand function
- **Bioness® L300™:** An advanced therapy system that uses electrical stimulation to help reduce foot drop
- **Myomo™ e100:** (new at Braintree Rehabilitation Hospital) A rehabilitation robot that uses a person's own brainwaves to help regain movement in a partially paralyzed arm

To learn more about all of the outpatient neuro-rehabilitation services at Braintree and New England Rehab Hospitals, please visit our websites or call 781-348-4020 (Braintree Rehab) or 781-935-5050, ext. 1601 (New England Rehab).

Braintree
Rehabilitation Hospital
250 Pond Street • Braintree
781-348-2500

**BRAINTREE &
NEW ENGLAND**
REHABILITATION HOSPITALS
FIVE★ QUALITY CARE HOSPITALS

New England
Rehabilitation Hospital
2 Rehabilitation Way • Woburn
781-935-5050

My [rehab]

How intensive rehabilitation helped one North Dartmouth man beat paralyzing injury

Joseph Fragozza never expected that at just 20 years old, he would suffer an injury that could prevent him from ever walking again. It happened on Christmas day in 2007, when a serious dirt bike accident left him paralyzed, with a partially severed spine.

Joseph had been riding his dirt bike with friends, when he attempted to pop a wheelie at 75 miles per hour. He lost control, flew off his bike, and hit a tree stump with tremendous impact. He knew right away that besides his dislocated shoulder and couple of broken ribs, there was something far more serious going on: "I heard my spine snap. I asked one of my friends if I was alive, and he said I was. But something was very wrong, because I couldn't feel my legs," Joseph recalls.



"The place was great; everyone was very helpful and sensitive to my situation."

After being taken by helicopter to Boston's Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, doctors learned he had suffered a T5-T6 break, which had nearly snapped his spine in half. He could hardly move the toes on his right foot, and the toes on the left wouldn't move at all.

After staying in the hospital for nine days, it was time to consider where to go for rehabilitation, and Joseph chose Braintree Rehabilitation Hospital, recommended to him by a friend.

"The place was great; everyone was very helpful and sensitive to my situation. They really try to put themselves in your position. I had to learn to do everything over again – sitting up, getting into a wheelchair, getting dressed, washing – basically how to be independent. For the first three or four days, I couldn't even get out of bed, but with the help of Jerilyn, Kristen, and Felicidad providing my occupational and physical therapy, I quickly got the hang of it," Joseph adds.

Joseph was discharged from Braintree Rehabilitation Hospital on February 6, 2008 – just a little over a month after he had been admitted. The most amazing part of all was that he walked out of the hospital on his own two legs. "I went from being paralyzed to being on two feet," he said. "When I checked in, the doctor told me that only about 20 percent of the people with this kind of injury ever walk again. But I told him I would walk again – in fact, I actually started using a walker around the middle of January."

"I've been a bodybuilder for a long time, so the fact that I had been in very good shape before the injury definitely helped in my recovery," Joseph added. "But that was only half of it – the other half was the quality of the therapy I received. They showed me what to do and made sure I did all of the exercises just right. Without it, I seriously doubt I would have made the kind of progress I did."

Joseph now attends outpatient therapy three times a week at New England Rehabilitation at Southcoast Wellness Center, North Dartmouth, MA. He is driving a car and confident he'll be back at work this summer. He plans to get back to riding his dirt bike eventually, but for now, he intends to keep getting stronger each day.

To learn more about the programs at Braintree Rehab Hospital, visit www.braintreerehabhospital.com or call 781-348-2107.

Your
[rehab]
at
New England Rehabilitation

RENOVATIONS AT NEW ENGLAND REHABILITATION HOSPITAL

New and exciting changes are occurring at New England Rehabilitation Hospital at Woburn. A new hospital entrance with a protective canopy and improved handicapped parking has just been completed. We are about to begin upgrades to each hospital floor to include new room finishes, a flat screen TV at each hospital bed, cable and WiFi availability and upgraded climate control in patient rooms. In June the outpatient department will be renovated and new state-of-the-art equipment delivered.

EVENTS, SUPPORT GROUPS, AND FUNDRAISERS

Since October, our employees have raised nearly \$1,900 for charity by donating \$5 to wear jeans one Friday each month. Causes we've supported include:

- Winchester Hospital Breast Care Center
- Everett Explosion Fund
- Social Concerns, Inc. of Woburn
- National Autism Association
- American Heart Association
- Lawrence Fire Victims

Thank You!

In honor of **National Nurses Week** May 6-12th, Braintree and New England Rehabilitation Hospitals would like to thank all nurses, for making a difference, every day of the year.

Understanding [rehab]

Acute rehabilitation and skilled nursing care: knowing which setting is right for you

When you need rehabilitation after a hospital stay, you'll be faced with a variety of options. The process of choosing the right place for you can be overwhelming, especially when it comes to deciding between an acute rehab hospital and a skilled nursing facility. The good news is, all acute care hospitals have a staff of dedicated case managers who will assist you in selecting the correct type of rehabilitation facility for your needs.

There are many important factors to consider as you make your decision that go beyond decor or how close a facility is to your home. What you may not know is you and your family have the right, working with your case manager at the acute care hospital, to request one or more rehabilitation facilities of your choosing to review your case and determine if you qualify for admission.

For patients who require rehabilitation following significant illness, injury or surgery, acute rehabilitation hospitals are designed, staffed and offer the programming to utilize every opportunity to improve their quality of life.

When compared to the traditional rehabilitation programs offered at a skilled nursing facility, Braintree and New England Rehabilitation Hospitals offer:

- A higher intensity of rehabilitation
- 24-hour nursing care by registered nurses, many of whom are certified rehabilitation nurses
- Daily visits by our physician staff, many board certified in various fields of rehabilitation medicine
- Three (3) hours of therapy per day, five (5) days per week
- Multi-disciplinary team approach with a full-time staff
- The latest in rehabilitation technology
- Seventeen (17) outpatient centers throughout eastern Massachusetts at which to continue your rehabilitation program

Our hospitals also offer the added benefit of psychiatry and neuropsychology services, support groups, diagnostic-specific treatment spaces, 24-hour telemetry monitoring capabilities, a functional training apartment for home ADL training, and a therapeutic pool.

For more information, or to schedule a tour of our hospitals, please call 781-935-5050 ext. 1275 (New England Rehab), 781-348-2138 (Braintree Rehab) or email rehabwrapup@5sqc.com.

Download a convenient checklist to help you compare facilities at www.newenglandrehab.com or www.braintreerehabhospital.com.

We want to hear from you! Let us know how you're doing, ask questions, and learn more about the programs that might be able to help you, a friend, or family member live well. Email rehabwrapup@5sqc.com.

With inpatient and outpatient centers located throughout eastern Massachusetts, you can receive the care you need close to home, close to work, and close to your family. Visit our websites for a complete listing of our programs, services, and locations.

ABINGTON	MELROSE
BILLERICA	MILFORD
BRAINTREE	NATICK
BROCKTON	NORTH DARTMOUTH
DANVERS	PLYMOUTH
FRAMINGHAM	QUINCY
HANOVER	SHARON
HYANNIS	TAUNTON
LYNNFIELD	WOBURN
LOWELL	

