

Focus On Therapy:

By Amanda Green

Healthcare Therapy Services

Brief Overview of Post Acute Care

Post Acute is a skilled stay following a qualifying 3-day inpatient hospitalization from post-surgical recovery, injury or illness. The post acute discharge is not only financially strengthening to an organization, but also benefits the building's market position and ultimately the patient experience.

Why Should You Focus Your Building Toward Post Acute Care?

1. The technological advancements of orthopaedic procedures have reduced the recovery time for patients. For example, a knee replacement in 1992 equated to 6 inpatient hospital days. In 2011, the inpatient stay is around 2-3 days on average.
2. Hospitals are overcrowded. They depend on LTC's that are focused on post acute care to continue care similar to the ARU (Acute Rehab Units) and IRF (Inpatient Rehab Facilities). One could say that post acute centers are the new and less expensive inpatient rehab facilities for aging adults who are not appropriate for an ARU/IRF setting.
3. Post Acute care has greatly reduced hospital readmissions and bridges the gap of the recovery between the hospital and the home.
4. Commercial insurances recognize the cost effectiveness of post acute care. Within the past 6 years they have started to increase their referrals of younger adults ages 30+ into this setting.
5. Post Acute Care centers have reshaped the face of long term care by showing consumers that there is still a lot of *living* going on behind the walls of a long term care facility.

Different Faces of Post Acute Care

Nazareth Home expanded its business model to create a designated short-stay recovery center in 2005. Mary Haynes and her staff strategically designed their "Recovery to Home" program to anticipate and accommodate the unique needs and wants of their current market and future baby boomers.

"Already committed to person directed care, we found the creation of our short stay program to be surprisingly energizing for all of our programs. Its growth has been a catalyst for change by causing us to examine all of our programs and relationships to find the most userfriendly and consumer-oriented models of relationships and care. We have also grown in our science of assessment and have become engaged in community partnerships because of our commitment to the Recovery to Home program. We strive to have Nazareth Home be a great community to live, work and learn. Our Recovery to Home program has given us a diversity of experience and learning that has made our community stronger."

Mary Haynes, CEO/Administrator

Patients and families can enjoy cozy private rehab suites, flat screen TV, free Wi-Fi and private and in-room dining options. Nazareth Home expanded to provide a second rehab gym and an additional Recovery to Home therapy team designated for this specific clientele.

The second therapy gym is located in the Recovery to Home center and has specialized equipment to treat more acute orthopaedic, post-cardiac and neurological conditions. Nazareth Home's clinical staff received specialized training and the entire recovery care team works as a synergistic unit to help each individual achieve their recovery goals.

“Recovery to Home at Nazareth Home is a whole different mindset. From the beginning, we look at the whole person (physical, emotional & spiritual) and what they have to accomplish in order to get back to life as they knew it. There is a cohesive mission from nursing and therapy to work together to achieve this goal.

Cindy Linton, Rehab Manager

Hillcrest Nursing & Rehabilitation Center

At Hillcrest, the entire building has been adapted for short-term rehabilitation. The facility is focused on providing care for persons of all rehab levels. What makes Hillcrest unique is its “all hands on deck” approach. At Hillcrest, care plans are completed within 24-48 hours of admission so that discharge planning starts from day one and the goals set forth are clearly communicated every step of the way.

“We work together to proactively approach barriers such as balance deficits that would limit a person’s ability to return home. Working together, we are on the same page as far as getting each person home as quickly as possible.”

Wayne Thompson, Rehab Manager.

North Hardin Health & Rehabilitation Center

Although North Hardin Health and Rehabilitation Center has not declared an official short-term rehab or rehab to home unit they are expanding their therapy gym to accommodate the increasing demand for short stay return to home patients.

Upon admission, patients and/or their families meet with the interdisciplinary team to create a plan that meets their goals and expectations. Interdisciplinary teams meet daily to review patient progress and update the plan of care as changes in psychosocial or clinical needs are identified. Today’s short term rehab patient’s needs, wants and expectations serve to reiterate the importance of a truly individualized patient centered approach to care. North Hardin Health and Rehab believes that communication and customer service are vital to create the optimum rehab experience and facilitate a smooth transition back home and to the community.

Submitted by Kara Meredith, Administrator.

Post Acute Care is a Mindset

Almost every organization has great rehab success stories. HTS has assisted in opening 26 post-acute care centers of all types for our clients. Whether or not your organization can remodel to all private rooms and flat screens, the patient **EXPERIENCE** is the most important aspect of post acute care. The clinical and customer service demands for post acute are slightly different.

Therefore, it is necessary to provide clinical and customer service training to your marketing and clinical staff to accommodate the post acute patient. How is the experience pre-admission, during transition and their first night in your building? Do you have a care navigator to assist them through this process? Have we put a post acute patient in a room next to someone who is a long term resident? If so, will this negatively affect their attitude toward their own goal achievement? Are you catering towards the adult children? How quickly are you doing care plans and communicating with physicians?

Most importantly, how do you add this mindset without taking away from your existing facility- and in turn, enhance your mission to provide post acute care to your community?