



Sponsored by:
UPMC Rehabilitation Institute, Center for Spinal Cord Injury
UPMC Center for Continuing Education in the Health Sciences
University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine Department of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation

Overview

Nearly 18,000 individuals in the U.S. sustain a traumatic spinal cord injury (SCI) each year. Additionally, while non-traumatic SCI can be difficult to track, it is estimated to be roughly the same amount as traumatic injuries per year. The care of persons with SCI requires an interdisciplinary approach across the continuum of care. Providers should be aware of current evidence and care techniques for both traumatic and non-traumatic SCI across the continuum from initial injury, medical complications, many phases of rehab, and community reintegration. Spinal Cord Injury: An Interdisciplinary Rehabilitation Conference will introduce and review a variety of topics relevant to persons with SCI. Topics will focus on areas important to all team members, throughout the continuum of care. The conference will address, through lectures and discussion, in addition to hands-on learning opportunities, the treatments and strategies employed at the UPMC Rehabilitation Institute. Conference goals are in line with the missions of the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation and the UPMC Rehabilitation Institute to advance health, expand knowledge, and improve care through research, teaching rehabilitation services, and medical care.

Target Audience

Nurses, physical therapists, occupational therapists, speech therapists, case managers, social workers, physiatrists/physicians, fellows, and residents involved with the acute care and rehabilitation of persons with spinal cord injury are encouraged to attend.

Learning Objectives

1. Develop the clinical proficiency to identify, assess, and implement targeted interventions or facilitate specialty referrals for respiratory dysfunction following spinal cord injury.
2. Analyze contemporary healthcare developments and "hot topics" to evaluate their specific implications for persons with spinal cord injury.
3. Contrast the clinical requirements and care trajectories of patients with non-traumatic versus traumatic spinal cord injuries to provide tailored rehabilitation.
4. Demonstrate competency in foundational power wheelchair skills essential for maximizing patient independence and community accessibility.
5. Execute specialized positioning techniques across diverse care settings to optimize skin integrity and functional alignment unique to those with SCI.
6. Critically examine personal biases, linguistic choices, and cultural assumptions to foster a more equitable and inclusive environment for patient-centered care.
7. Integrate mental health surveillance into the multidisciplinary care model by equipping all team members to recognize clinical distress and implement supportive responses that optimize patient motivation and long-term coping strategies.

Course Directors* and Planning Committee

Amanda Harrington*, MD

Assistant Professor, UPMC Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Program Director, SCIM Fellowship, Director of Spinal Cord Injury Services

Rachel Hibbs*, DPT, NCS, ATP

Assistant Professor, University of Pittsburgh Department of Rehabilitation Science and Technology, Physical Therapist UPMC Mercy RI and Center for Assistive Technology

Elizabeth Stanley*, DPT

Clinical/Research Physical Therapist, UPMC Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation RNEL, UPMC Mercy RI

Christina DiBlasio, PhD

Rehabilitation Neuropsychologist, Assistant Professor UPMC School of Medicine

Olivia Hughes, MSW

Social Work, UPMC

Briana Kelly, OTR/L

Director, Operations, UPMC Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Physicians

Robert Masterson, SLP

Speech Therapist, UPMC Rehabilitation Institute

Lonna Perella, BSN, RN

Nurse Manager, UPMC Rehabilitation Institute outpatient

Darcie Petrillo, MPAS, PA-C

Physician Assistant, UPMC Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation

Lynn Worobey, PhD, DPT, ATP

Assistant Professor, UPMC Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation RNEL

Faculty Listing

Matthew Berwick, BA, MA, MS	Senior Program Manager, Disability Accommodations, UPMC
Nancy Czolba, RN	Staff Nurse, UPMC Rehabilitation Institute at Mercy
Julie Gallagher, DPT	Physical Therapist, UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh
Robert Gaunt, PhD	Associate Professor, University of Pittsburgh Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation RNEL
Juli Harrison, OTD, OTR/L, ATP	Occupational Therapist, Research Therapist, University of Pittsburgh
Meredith Karavolis, OTR/L, ATP	Occupational Therapist, Research Therapist, University of Pittsburgh RNEL
Robert Masterson, SLP	Speech Therapist, UPMC Rehabilitation Institute
Caitlyn McGrane, OTR/L	Occupational Therapist, UPMC Mercy RI
Ashli Molinero, DSc	Dir. Disability Resource Center, UPMC
Paige Morgan, PT, DPT	Physical Therapist, UPMC Mercy RI
Nick Nestor, MD	Resident Physician, UPMC Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation
Janna Nicola, OTR/L, ATP	Occupational Therapist, Research Therapist, University of Pittsburgh RNEL
Drew Redepenning, MD	Resident Physician, UPMC Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation
David Rivetti, MD	Resident Physician, UPMC Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation
Rebecca Russell, PT, DPT, ATP	Physical Therapist, UPMC Rehabilitation Institute Center for Assistive Technology
Cas Speanburg	Research Coordinator, Peer Mentor, University of Pittsburgh RNEL
Joseph Straatmann, OTD, OTR/L, ATP	Occupational Therapist, UPMC Rehabilitation Institute Center for Assistive Technology
Katy Stauffer, MD	Attending Physician, UPMC Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation
Caroline Vail, DO	Attending Physician, UPMC Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation

Program Schedule

7:00-7:30 am	Sign-In (Continental Breakfast provided)	
7:30-7:40 am	Introductions/Agenda	Course Directors: A Harrington, R Hibbs, E Stanley
7:40-8:40 am	Multidisciplinary Management of Respiratory Dysfunction After SCI	C Vail, J Gallagher, R Masterson, N Czolba
8:40-8:45 am	Break	
8:45-9:45 am	Non-traumatic Spinal Cord Injury: Clinically Relevant Considerations	K Stauffer, D Rivetti, N Nestor
9:45-9:55 am	Break	
9:55-11:25 am	Hot Topics in SCI Care: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Advocacy and Health care policy 2. Transcutaneous stim 3. GLP-1's in SCI 4. Airplane travel 5. Language matters 	M Berwick R Gaunt D Redepenning R Hibbs J Harrison
11:25-12:00 pm	Lunch (provided)	
12:00-12:30 pm	Rethinking Ableism	L Worobey, C Speanburg, A Molinaro
12:30-1:00 pm	Trauma Informed Care	C DiBlasio
1:00-1:10 pm	Break	
1:10-2:50 pm ✓ 1:10-1:40 Session ✓ 1:40-1:45 rotation ✓ 1:45-2:15 Session ✓ 2:15-2:20 rotation ✓ 2:20-2:50 Session	Breakout/Rotating Sessions <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Power Wheelchair Skills 2. Smart Technology 3. Positioning Considerations 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. R Russell, J Harrison, J Straatman 2. J Nicola, M Karavolis 3. P Morgan, C McGrane, E Stanley
2:50-3:00 pm	Closing Remarks	Course Directors: A Harrington, R Hibbs, E Stanley



JOINTLY ACCREDITED PROVIDER™
INTERPROFESSIONAL CONTINUING EDUCATION

CME Accreditation and Designation Statement

In support of improving patient care, the University of Pittsburgh is jointly accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME), the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE), and the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), to provide continuing education for the healthcare team.

Physician (CME) The University of Pittsburgh designates this live activity for a maximum of 6.5 AMA PRA Category 1 Credit[s]™. Physicians should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity

Nursing (CNE) The maximum number of hours awarded for this Continuing Nursing Education activity is 6.5 contact hours.

Physician Assistant (AAPA) The University of Pittsburgh has been authorized by the American Academy of PAs (AAPA) to award AAPA Category 1 CME credit for activities planned in accordance with AAPA CME Criteria. This activity is designated for 6.5 AAPA Category 1 CME credits. PAs should only claim credit commensurate with the extent of their participation.

Social Work (ASWB) As a Jointly Accredited Organization, the University of Pittsburgh is approved to offer social work continuing education by the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) Approved Continuing Education (ACE) program. Organizations, not individual courses, are approved under this program. Regulatory boards are the final authority on courses accepted for continuing education credit. Social workers completing this course receive TBD [type*] continuing education credits.

Psychologist (APA) Continuing Education (CE) credits for psychologists are provided through the co-sponsorship of the American Psychological Association (APA) Office of Continuing Education in Psychology (CEP). The APA CEP Office maintains responsibility for the content of the programs. This activity is approved for TBD APA credits.

Physical Therapy As an educational program accredited by CAPTE, the University of Pittsburgh, Department of Physical Therapy is a pre-approved provider of continuing education in Pennsylvania. This course is approved for 6.5 General education units.

Occupational Therapy As an educational program accredited by CAPTE, the University of Pittsburgh, Department of Occupational Therapy is a pre-approved provider of continuing education in Pennsylvania. This course is approved for 6.5 contact hours.

Other Healthcare Professionals: Other health care professionals will receive a certificate of attendance confirming the number of contact hours commensurate with the extent of participation in this activity.

Instructions to Register

Deadline to register is April 10, 2026. Registering **online** is the quickest and easiest way to reserve your space at CCEHS conferences. **Direct link:** <https://cce.upmc.com/spinal-cord-injury-interdisciplinary-rehabilitation-conference-evidence-based-care-across>. *Click the "Register/Take Course" Button and enter all the requested information. After registering, an electronic confirmation will be sent to you. Online registration is complete upon receipt of a confirmation email. If you do not receive the confirmation email immediately, please contact Brianne Shields shieldsbe@upmc.edu*

Registration Fees

All cancellations must be in writing and sent to Brianne Shields. Tuition for cancellations postmarked or date stamped on/before April 10, 2026 will be refunded in full. No refunds will be made after April 10, 2026.

Standard Registration: \$70.00

Student Tuition: \$30

Student ID must be presented at conference sign in.

The Americans with Disabilities Act Information

Participation by all individuals is encouraged. Advance notification of any special needs will help us provide better service. Please notify us of your needs at least two weeks in advance of the program by calling Brianne Shields at 412-648-6786