

CLINICAL REHAB *perspective s*

Sister Kenny® Rehabilitation Institute, located at 28th Street and Chicago Avenue in Minneapolis, Minn., is the leading rehabilitation provider in the region. The Institute provides programs and services at five Allina hospitals — Abbott Northwestern in Minneapolis, United in St. Paul, Unity Hospital in Fridley, Mercy in Coon Rapids and Buffalo Hospital in Buffalo — and outpatient care at community-based Sister Kenny Sports & Physical Therapy Centers.

This specialized approach is extremely helpful for patients with spinal conditions or pain that has not been remedied by traditional approaches and who are not candidates for surgery.

Back in shape: Sister Kenny Spine Center offers specialized care for spine problems

Back and neck pain brings many patients into the primary care setting — in fact, low back pain is one of the most common reasons for a physician office visit.

Proper posture, self-care techniques and physical therapy can alleviate most cases of neck and back pain. But when an injury is more serious or when pain continues despite treatment, the specialized care available through Sister Kenny Spine Center may be the answer.

Sister Kenny Spine Center, with locations in Edina and Woodbury, provides non-surgical treatment for people who have acute, sub-acute or chronic low back or neck pain. “The Spine Center offers a comprehensive program that is geared toward wellness,” said Jennine Speier, MD, medical director of Sister Kenny Rehabilitation Institute.

The specialized staff and unique treatment approaches available at Sister Kenny Spine Center give patients an alternative to standard therapies.

For example, a physiatrist provides an assessment of each patient that includes:

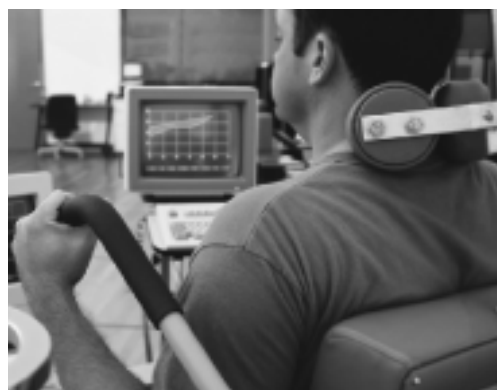
- review of medical history, treatment, X-rays and other studies
- physical examination
- treatment recommendations.

The physician works in partnership with primary care physicians and other specialists to manage the patient’s care. This specialized approach is extremely helpful for patients

with spinal conditions or pain that has not been remedied by traditional approaches and who are not candidates for surgery.

Sister Kenny Spine Center also has orthopaedically trained physical therapists to work with each patient. The therapists have advanced training and experience in joint-specific, manually based therapies. “That means we are prepared to offer more variety in hands-on therapy,” said Carolyn Flood, PT, Sister Kenny Spine Center – Edina.

In addition to a specialized staff, Sister Kenny Spine Center offers a comprehensive array of services in a single location.



“Our goal is to help patients achieve wellness and improve function,” said Speier. While injection therapies are available to manage pain, Sister Kenny Spine Center emphasizes a balanced approach to treatment, including spine physical therapy, spine strengthening exercises, integrative therapies

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Providing unique support to those recovering from a stroke



Stroke survivor Cheryl Smith
now volunteers for the Institute's
Stroke Peer Visitor Program.

Timely medical care and intensive rehabilitation have helped countless stroke survivors rebuild their lives and regain vital function. Helping survivors learn how to draw upon their own resources and strengths is also an important part of recovery.

The Stroke Peer Visitor Program is designed to do just that. Available at Abbott Northwestern and United hospitals, the Stroke Peer Visitor Program allows inpatients recovering from stroke to meet and visit with another survivor. The peer visitors receive extensive education about stroke and also attend a four-part peer visitor training program. Nearly all inpatients recovering from stroke are asked if they would like a peer visitor and most welcome the visit.

Organizers of the Stroke Peer Visitor Program, which include occupational therapy and social work staff at both hospitals, say that the peer visitors are not there to solve problems, but to listen and empathize.

“By simply being present, the peer visitors convey hope,” said Sue Newman, OT, a Sister Kenny Rehabilitation Institute occupational therapist at Abbott Northwestern Hospital. “When patients and family members see a peer visitor, they begin to realize ‘we won’t be here forever.’”

Staff members recruit peer visitors carefully. “We look for stroke survivors who are at least 18 months post-stroke,” said Leigh Bristol-Kagan, MSW, LicSW, a Sister Kenny Rehabilitation Institute social worker at United Hospital. “We want people who’ve had a chance to come to terms with their stroke.” Peer visitors also must demonstrate respect and appreciation for people from all walks of life.

In addition, peer visitors must be good listeners. “The peer visitors are not there to answer questions or provide information – they are really there to listen,” said

Bristol-Kagan. “Sometimes a patient just needs someone to acknowledge that this is a difficult thing to deal with – that acknowledgement is more effective coming from someone who has been there.”

Newman said that programs like peer visitors are especially helpful as the length of stay for stroke recovery decreases. “The stays are much shorter today. Helping patients feel hopeful about their recovery is a key step as they get closer to discharge.”

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serve as an endorsement
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—LEIGH BRISTOL-KAGAN,
MSW, LicSW

The program also includes family members, such as a spouse or an adult son or daughter, as peer visitors. “Family members are part of the recovery process — everyone is affected when a person has a stroke,” said Cheryl Smith, a stroke survivor and Abbott Northwestern peer visitor.

Peer visitors add a unique dimension to the care that stroke patients receive.

“The peer visitors serve as an endorsement to patients and families of their own capabilities in meeting the challenge of stroke recovery,” said Bristol-Kagan. “Rather than give solutions, the peer visitors help patients begin to think about what resources they have within themselves to face their challenges.”

New research on robotic arm

A new technology at Sister Kenny Rehabilitation Institute, the robotic arm, will soon be the subject of research that will help guide its use in rehabilitation.

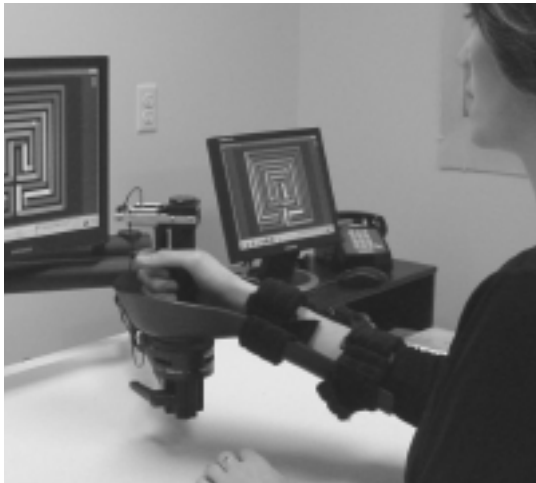
The robotic arm provides intensive rehabilitation for patients recovering from stroke or brain injury who have limited strength or movement in the upper extremities. The multiple repetitions that the therapy provides — up to 700 per hour — takes advantage of the brain's neuroplasticity. "The multiple repetitions help build new pathways in the brain, allowing the patient to increase function," said Matthew White, OTR/L.

Called the InMotion2, the robotic arm sits on a desktop, along with a computer monitor. The patient's arm is positioned in a trough connected to the robotic arm. The computer prompts the patient to perform a task, which is visually tracked on the screen. "The program automatically adapts to the amount of assistance the patient needs," said White.

The robotic arm performs four basic movements that are part of most therapy plans:

passive, active assistive, active range of motion and progressive resistance.

The technology has been researched for the past 10 years, but has not been used as part of regular therapy. Sister Kenny Rehabilitation Institute is one of the first to use it in a patient care setting. Researchers at the Institute intend to build on the current literature related to using the device in therapy.



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Excellian implementation leading to more efficient care

Sister Kenny Rehabilitation Associates has successfully transitioned to Excellian, the electronic medical record system that Allina Hospitals & Clinics is implementing in all of its hospitals and clinics over the next several years.

SKRA was one of the first hospital-based clinics at Abbott Northwestern to begin using Excellian. The clinic went live with the practice management application (registration, scheduling and billing) in early spring and began using physician documentation, order entry and InBasket on April 19.

While the implementation presented a variety of challenges, Jennine Speier, MD, medical director of Sister Kenny Rehabilitation Institute, credits staff and

physicians with ensuring a smooth transition. In addition, the clinic has experienced several improvements resulting from the Excellian implementation.

"Our efficiency in answering phone calls, handling medication refills and providing test results has improved significantly," said Speier. "Far fewer charts are pulled because the key information is available in Excellian."

Physicians and other caregivers also have immediate access to the patient's records from a variety of providers. "The biggest advantage is that multiple providers can see results immediately. That's a tremendous advantage and leads to less fragmented care," said Speier.

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Focus on a facility: Sister Kenny Sports & Physical Therapy Center – Shoreview

The Sister Kenny Sports & Physical Therapy Center – Shoreview opened in May 2005 and offers treatment for everything from everyday sprains to major injuries.

The clinic has six exam rooms and a fully equipped physical therapy gym. The clinic's specially-trained physical therapists — Rocky Koehn, PT, site coordinator; and Lloyd Fjare, PT — provide one-to-one treatment that includes an individualized home exercise program with an emphasis on active condition management.

Clinic patients also have access to many of Sister Kenny Rehabilitation Institute's specialty programs available at other locations, including aquatic therapy, lymphedema management, neuro therapy, programs in women's health, running analysis and hand therapy.

The clinic is located at 4180 N. Lexington Ave. in Shoreview. For more information, call 651-241-1455 or visit www.sisterkennyinstitute.com.



Institute receives three-year CARF accreditation

In June, Sister Kenny Rehabilitation Institute's inpatient rehabilitation programs successfully completed a survey from the Commission on the Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities. CARF is an independent national organization that certifies facilities that meet the highest patient care standards. The Institute's previous survey was conducted in 2002.

According to the surveyors, the Institute's strengths include:

- an experienced rehabilitation team that is dedicated to quality care
- innovative programs

- the Safe Transfers Every Person Succeeds (STEPS) program that has led to consistent and efficient transfer techniques used by staff and families
- the significant number of research opportunities as well as support for staff education and training opportunities
- the Sister Kenny Foundation's continued efforts to support the growth and development of equipment, training, new programs and activities in order to provide outstanding rehabilitation services to those served
- the use of research-based technology to assist the therapy team in providing innovative treatment to improve functional outcomes.

John Hoops, PT, receives Clinical Educator of the Year Award

John Hoops, a physical therapist at Sister Kenny Sports & Physical Therapy Center-St. Paul, recently received the University of Minnesota Program in Physical Therapy's Clinical Educator of the Year Award.

Hoops was recognized for his "dedication to the instruction of the university's physical therapy students, his willingness to help in both classroom and clinical teaching, and his ability to impart both a passion and excitement about the physical therapy profession."

"It's an honor to be recognized for teaching, which is something I really enjoy," said Hoops. "After being a clinician for 16 years, I feel a responsibility to give something back. Teaching is also good for me too — it makes me review why I do what I do and forces me to be at my best."

New mobility technology now available at Sister Kenny Rehabilitation Institute

In June, Sister Kenny Rehabilitation Institute became one of the first rehabilitation centers in America to offer the Independence® iBOT™ 3000 Mobility System, the FDA-approved personal mobility system for people with disabilities.

The iBOT Mobility System functions like a power chair, but can also:

- climb and descend stairs
- traverse sand, gravel and grass
- climb curbs
- rise up on two wheels, placing the user at eye level.

“We’re pleased to offer this innovative mobility device to our patients,” said Tim Bowman, manager of the Institute’s Advanced Rehabilitative Technologies Program. “The iBOT is an amazing technology that provides greater independence to individuals with disabilities.”

Priced at \$26,100, the iBOT is the most thoroughly tested, studied and sophisticated device ever manufactured for the disability community. In order to receive an iBOT, a person must meet specific prequalification criteria and receive an assessment performed by a trained iBOT



Greg Wahlberg, who has a spinal cord injury, traveled from Hudson, Wis., to be among the first to complete training and pick up his iBOT™ Mobility System at Sister Kenny Rehabilitation Institute.

evaluation clinician. Sister Kenny Rehabilitation Institute is the only Minnesota facility designated as an iBOT Mobility System Evaluation Center.

“Our staff has received extensive training in order to prescribe this device that is considered a breakthrough in accessibility,” said Bowman.

For more information about the iBOT, visit www.ibotnow.com.

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and patient education. “We really focus on a lifestyle management and reconditioning approach, not a medication approach,” said Speier.

Following evaluation by the physiatrist and physical therapist, patients begin a 12-week program to increase strength and function. The patient is instructed in a comprehensive program that includes stretching, spine strengthening and general strengthening exercises and cardiovascular conditioning. The patient is tested every four weeks to assess progress.

A key component of Sister Kenny Spine Center services is the MedX system, advanced

exercise equipment that strengthens the spine. “It allows us to stabilize and target the muscles for specific strengthening exercises,” said Flood. The equipment is also used to assess the condition of the spine and the patient’s strength and flexibility. “We can see exactly where the patient is compared to norms for age and sex, and we also use the equipment to measure progress over time,” she added.

Patients also have access to integrative therapies at Sister Kenny Spine Center, including massage.

To refer a patient or for more information, call the Spine Line at 800-827-8313.

Sister Kenny Spine Center is conveniently located in Edina and Woodbury.

Sister Kenny Spine Center – Edina
Abbott Northwestern’s Center
for Outpatient Care
8100 West 78th Street
Edina, MN 55439

Sister Kenny Spine Center – Woodbury
8450 City Centre Dr.
Woodbury, MN 55125

Clinician
PROFILE:

Karen Schmitz, physical therapist



Karen Schmitz, PT

During her years as a competitive athlete throughout high school and college, Karen Schmitz had to use the services of several physical therapists. So when it came time to decide on a career path, she chose a profession with which she was familiar.

“I had great experiences with the physical therapists I worked with over the years,” said Schmitz. “Plus, their jobs looked fun.”

After graduating from Northwestern University’s physical therapy program in 1990, Schmitz spent the first year of her career at Sister Kenny Rehabilitation Institute’s out-patient program at Abbott Northwestern Hospital. For the past four years, she has been on staff at the Sister Kenny Sports & Physical

Therapy Center in Woodbury where she specializes in orthopaedics, sports injuries, women’s issues and Pilates-based exercises. She also works with patients with low back and neck pain at the new Sister Kenny Spine Center in Woodbury (see related article on cover).

“The most rewarding part of my job is seeing someone who starts out being apprehensive and skeptical about physical therapy improve over time and come to appreciate the benefits of exercise, posture and staying healthy,” said Schmitz. “Helping people feel better has a positive impact on their lives and mine.”

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