

KENNY *Independent*

Sister Kenny® Rehabilitation Institute 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.

The new Kenny Education Center is opening at Sister Kenny Rehabilitation Institute at Abbott Northwestern Hospital. The center is located on Station 23 and will house patient education resources (books, brochures and videos), include space for support group meetings, and offer internet access for patients and families.

Cancer rehabilitation services: Helping patients get their lives back

Cancer remains a dreaded disease — but surviving cancer is no longer an uncommon occurrence. Today, nearly 60 percent of people diagnosed with cancer survive at least five years.

But for many cancer patients, simply surviving is not enough. “Our patients often say, ‘I’m happy I’ve survived — now I want my life back,’” said Nancy Hutchison, MD, a specialist in physical medicine and rehabilitation and director of Cancer Rehabilitation Services at Sister Kenny Rehabilitation Institute. Cancer rehabilitation services are offered in partnership with Abbott Northwestern Hospital’s Virginia Piper Cancer Institute (VPCI).

Despite recent improvements in surgery, chemotherapy and other treatments, cancer and its treatment can affect how a person functions in everyday life. Cancer patients may have difficulty with daily living and vocational skills, eating, swallowing, mobility, exercise, strength, coordination and stamina.

Enhancing quality of life

Cancer rehabilitation services can help cancer patients in all stages of the disease enhance their quality of life and improve function. Services include a lymphedema clinic, inpatient and outpatient cancer rehabilitation consultations, and exercise prescriptions.

“Any decline in a skill or function can benefit from a rehabilitation consultation,” said Hutchison. As more cancer patients live longer with the disease, helping them regain function is critical. “We know that patients can live for



The cancer rehabilitation team at Sister Kenny Rehabilitation Institute.

years with their cancer in an arrested state. You can live with this disease and still have good quality of life.”

One of the most common problems among cancer patients is a decline in the ability to exercise because of fatigue or physical impairment. “Exercise has both physical and psychological benefits for patients,” said Hutchison. After evaluating the patient’s physical status, Hutchison recommends an exercise program and refers the patient to a physical or occupational therapist if necessary.

Even when a complete cure is not possible, rehabilitation services help patients and their

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What is a physiatrist?

Sister Kenny Rehabilitation Associates

Physiatrists within Sister Kenny Rehabilitation Associates are board-certified in physical medicine and rehabilitation. They have advanced training and special expertise in treating patients with:

- arthritis/inflammatory conditions
- bladder and bowel incontinence
- brain injury
- cancer-related weakness, fatigue or decline in daily living skills
- cognitive dysfunction due to neurologic injury
- lymphedema
- medical problems of instrumental artists
- musculoskeletal injuries
- neuromuscular diseases and injuries
- orthopaedic problems/amputations
- post-polio syndrome
- repetitive motion disorders
- spasticity/muscle tone abnormalities
- spinal cord injury
- stroke

The practice has offices at Abbott Northwestern Hospital in Minneapolis and United Hospital in St. Paul. For an appointment or to make a referral, call 612-863-4495 in Minneapolis or 651-241-8295 in St. Paul. For more information, visit www.sisterkennyinstitute.com.

While physiatrists treat problems that may affect any part of the body or any organ system, they have a single focus: to improve quality of life.

Physiatrists are physicians who specialize in physical medicine and rehabilitation. They treat problems ranging from sports injuries and low back pain to brain injuries and nervous system disorders.

“Whenever an illness or injury affects your ability to participate in an activity or function in day-to-day life, that’s the time to consult with a physiatrist,” said David Rippe, MD, a physiatrist with Sister Kenny Rehabilitation Associates.

A growing medical specialty

Physiatry grew out of the need to care for disabled World War II veterans. As more people survive traumatic injuries or live with chronic illnesses, the demand for physiatrists has grown. Residency programs have expanded dramatically in recent years. The American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation expects the number of physiatrists to double over the next 20 years.

According to Rippe, many physicians are not familiar with physiatry and what it can offer to patients. “That’s because there were so few residency programs in physical medicine and rehabilitation when they were training,” said Rippe.

Providing a global view

One of the ways that physiatrists provide effective care is by looking at the whole person, not just the presenting injury or condition.

For example, a pitcher who is seen for a shoulder injury may have tightness in the hip.

That causes him to exert extra torque on the shoulder.

“You might say that the shoulder is the victim,

but we look to see who is the culprit,” said Rippe. “We take a global view.”

That holistic approach is critical to meeting the needs of patients with conditions like spinal cord injury, stroke or brain injury. “The key question is always, what is the limiting factor? What needs to change for the patient to regain function?” said Rippe.

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Specialized diagnostic tools and treatments

Physiatrists have advanced training in diagnosing and treating problems that affect the muscles, joints and skeletal as well as neurologic system. When evaluating a patient, they conduct thorough medical histories and physicals. They also use specialized diagnostic tools such as electromyography, nerve conduction studies and somatosensory evoked potentials.

Treatments may include medications; assistive devices; physical, occupational or speech therapy; therapeutic exercise; biofeedback; electrotherapies; massage; heat and cold therapy; therapeutic injections; and more.

Physiatrists often work as part of a team with other physicians and care providers. “The opportunity to practice collaborative medicine is one of the most rewarding parts of the job,” said Rippe.

Whether helping a runner return to marathon competition or ensuring that a stroke patient regains as much function as possible, physiatrists are committed to improving a patient’s quality of life. “No matter where a patient starts from, there are always many things we can do to help,” said Rippe.

Supporting the Institute's mission of "making lives work"

The Sister Kenny Foundation is a nonprofit, charitable organization that raises and distributes philanthropic funds to foster and support innovative patient services, clinical research, professional education and advanced technologies at Sister Kenny Rehabilitation Institute.

The Foundation is managed by board members who are local leaders in business, health care and the community. The board of directors are M. Patricia Hoven, chairwoman; Mary Lee Dayton, vice chairwoman; Lewis P. Zeidner, vice chairman; Ann Dayton, secretary; and J. Robert Paulson, treasurer. Members of the 2006-07 board are Ruth Ann Benson, John Fox

Blackshaw, Mary Des Roches, Ann Ellwood, Rita G. Kaplan, Michele R. Keith (past chairwoman), Robin Landy, Ross McGlasson, Edward Pluimer, Beth Sjoblad, Jennine L. Speier, MD, Richard Sturgeon, MD, Kay Wangard and Robert Wieland, MD. The Foundation is staffed by Sandy Landberg, executive director, and Don Reiland, manager, Foundation Accounting.

For more information about the Foundation and its work to support innovative rehabilitation at Sister Kenny Rehabilitation Institute, visit www.sisterkennyinstitute.com or call 612-863-4145.

Professional education allows our therapists to provide the best possible care

As rehabilitative care continues to change and grow, so too must the training of our nurses and therapists.

In 2006, the following physical therapists earned board certification as clinical specialists:

- **Chris Berchem**, orthopedic clinical specialist, Sister Kenny Sports & Physical Therapy Center – Cottage Grove
- **Justin Blood**, orthopedic clinical specialist, Sister Kenny Sports & Physical Therapy – St. Paul
- **Kristin Johnson**, neurologic clinical specialist, Sister Kenny Rehabilitation Institute at United Hospital
- **Nancy Kilzer**, gerontology clinical specialist, Sister Kenny Rehabilitation Institute at Abbott Northwestern Hospital
- **Maurie Steinley**, sports physical therapy clinical specialist, Sister Kenny Sports & Physical Therapy – Sartell

The board certification process helps a physical therapist build on a broad base of professional education and patient care to deepen their knowledge and skills. More importantly, board certified therapists are specially trained to provide the highest possible level of rehabilitative care in a specific area.

Post-polio and stroke support groups

Post-polio support group now available

A new support group for people with post-polio syndrome meets monthly at Sister Kenny Rehabilitation Institute at Abbott Northwestern Hospital in Minneapolis.

Post polio syndrome is a condition occurring in individuals who had acute poliomyelitis years earlier. Signs and symptoms of the condition include pain, new muscle weakness, fatigue, sleep disturbance, impaired breathing, swallowing difficulties, and loss of function in ambulation and in activities of daily living.

For more information about the support group, call 651-484-8297.

Stroke support groups

Sister Kenny Rehabilitation Institute now offers stroke support groups in two locations:

Abbott Northwestern Hospital (Minneapolis)
2-3:30 p.m., second Wednesday of the month
Call 612-863-4996

United Hospital (St. Paul)
2-3:30 p.m., second Thursday of the month
Call 651-241-8071

The groups are for stroke survivors and their families. Other stroke support groups may be found by calling the Minnesota Stroke Association at 763-553-0088

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Visit www.sisterkennyinstitute.com for more information.

Focus on a facility: Sister Kenny Sports & Physical Therapy Center – White Bear Lake

The Sister Kenny Sports & Physical Therapy Center – White Bear Lake offers outpatient rehabilitation services to treat everything from everyday strains and sprains to major injuries.

The clinic's specially-trained physical therapists provide one-to-one treatment that includes aquatic therapy, spine rehabilitation, sports physical therapy, treatment for women's incontinence/pelvic pain, and postural restoration (see related story on p.3).

The clinic is located in White Bear Lake at 945 Wildwood Road. For more information, call 651-770-0176 or visit www.sisterkennyinstitute.com.



Cancer rehabilitation *continued from front cover*

families achieve important goals. Hutchison recalls one patient who wanted to regain enough strength to walk his daughter down the aisle on her wedding day. Another patient being treated for esophageal cancer sought her help because of swallowing trouble. He wanted to avoid a feeding tube for as long as possible.

Working closely with cancer specialists

By working closely with VPCI Cancer Clinic specialists and staff, Hutchison has gained a unique understanding of the medical, physical, emotional and vocational issues involved in cancer diagnosis and treatment. This collaboration also ensures that the rehabilitation perspective is reflected in patient care conferences and treatment planning.

Hutchison offers a range of interventions to help patients get through some of the common side effects of cancer treatment, such as bowel and bladder problems, joint pain, swelling and balance problems. "We can help address any number of symptoms — at that point, our focus

is simply to support patients as they are going through treatment."

She also helps patients dealing with long-term consequences of cancer treatment. "Sometimes there is a long delay between the treatment and when the person begins to experience problems," she said. Patients and their doctors may not even be aware that some symptoms are related to cancer treatment.

"Many people just accept the symptoms and don't realize there's a lot we can do to help," said Hutchison. "No matter how small the symptom, the question is whether it affects your ability to do what you want."

Learn more

For information about Cancer Rehabilitation Services, call 612-863-4495 or visit www.sisterkennyinstitute.com.



Nancy Hutchison, MD, is a specialist in physical medicine and rehabilitation and director of Cancer Rehabilitation Services at Sister Kenny Rehabilitation Institute.

Postural restoration: realigning muscles and joints for improved health

Regular bouts of severe pain in his chest and upper back brought Gerald Larson, 41, to his doctor. Fortunately, his doctor was able to rule out a heart attack. But the cause of his pain remained a mystery.

“I mostly noticed it at night,” said Larson. The pain was so strong that it woke him up and made it nearly impossible for him to move. “If there had been a fire, I would have been stuck — there was no way I could get up and move around.”

The mystery was solved the day he met Mark Cook, PT, PhD, a physical therapist and clinical coordinator at Sister Kenny Sports & Physical Therapy Center – White Bear Lake.

“He took one look at me and said, ‘I think I know what the problem is,’” recalled Larson. Cook asked him to stand up. In studying Larson’s posture, Cook could see that his left hip was shifted down and forward, twisting his torso slightly to the right and making one shoulder lower than the other.

Cook is one of a growing number of physical therapists who uses postural restoration, an innovative approach to treating orthopaedic problems and pain.

Postural restoration focuses on treating common muscle and skeletal imbalances that make one’s posture asymmetrical. By using manual techniques, exercises and stretches, postural restoration can alleviate pain and dysfunction. Therapists also teach patients to modify their daily activities to maintain proper alignment. According to Cook, the particular pattern of the muscle and skeletal

imbalance that Larson had developed is not uncommon. “When I see someone with upper back, shoulder or neck problems, one of the first things I do is to check the pelvis and hips for alignment.”

Asymmetrical posture can affect the body in a variety of ways, said Cook. For example, inefficient breathing patterns may develop because the ribs are pulled out of alignment. One lung may not be getting enough air in while the other may not be getting enough out. “If we reposition the ribs to allow the lungs to work more symmetrically, the patient can move air in and out of both lungs more efficiently,” said Cook.

Postural restoration therapy focuses on three areas: the lumbar-pelvic region, upper back and ribs, and the neck and jaw.

Cook views it as an alternative when traditional physical therapy techniques have not been effective. “It can be very helpful for people dealing with chronic conditions or those with pain in several areas that do not seem related,” said Cook.

Correcting asymmetrical posture can have almost an immediate effect on the patient’s pain, range of motion and function. But it’s important for patients to continue the prescribed exercises and stretches in order to maintain symmetry. While Larson doesn’t do his exercises as frequently as he used to, he is able to keep his symptoms in check. “It took 40 years for it to go out of whack, so it makes sense that you need to keep working at it. Now if I have pain, I know exactly what the problem is and start doing the exercises more often.”



For information about postural restoration, contact the Sister Kenny Sports & Physical Therapy Center – White Bear Lake at 651-770-0176.

Sister Kenny WARMS may help patients meet therapy goals

Sister Kenny Rehabilitation Institute is entering the second phase of a research project that may help improve patients' ability to adhere to therapy recommendations.

Called the Sister Kenny Web-based Adherence Reinforcement Monitoring System, or WARMS, the project uses pocket computers to allow therapists to query patients on therapy adherence and provide timely reminders. Researchers at Sister Kenny are partnering with Caisson Medical to develop the project.

Patients carrying the pocket computers receive questions or reminders from the project's Web site and are asked to respond using the computer's touch screen. Therapists can monitor

patient responses and provide follow-up if necessary.

The first phase of the project involved having former stroke patients carry the computers for a week to determine if the technology was user-friendly and if it could be used consistently. The second phase will evaluate the effectiveness of the system in encouraging patients to meet therapy goals.

"We make the assumption that what people learn in therapy will transfer when they're at home," said Mary Vining Radomski, MA, OTR/L, coordinator of rehabilitation outcomes, quality and research at Sister Kenny. "In my experience, people really benefit from being accountable to follow through."



Clinician profile: *David M. Rippe, MD*

David Rippe recently joined the Institute's physician group, Sister Kenny Rehabilitation Associates. He received his medical degree at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine and completed a residency in physical medicine and rehabilitation at the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago. He is board eligible in physical medicine and rehabilitation.

Rippe treats patients with physical disabilities

and musculoskeletal injuries, and specializes in electrodiagnosis (EMG); stroke rehabilitation; amputee care; prosthetics and orthotics; and acute musculoskeletal, neck and back injuries.

He is on staff at Sister Kenny Rehabilitation Institute at Abbott Northwestern Hospital in Minneapolis.

Read more about Rippe and his role as a physiatrist on p.2.

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Sister Kenny Rehabilitation Institute
Allina Health System
800 East 28th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55407

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