



Interdisciplinary Initiatives: Rehabilitation Teamwork At Its Best

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Development of the Interdisciplinary Clinical Practice Group (ICPG)

Inspired by the well-established Nursing Clinical Practice Group, the Interdisciplinary Clinical Practice Group (ICPG) was developed to address practice issues specific to the UNC Rehabilitation Center. The group meets on a weekly basis to discuss various issues on the unit and develop initiatives and interventions to address these issues.

The ICPG is made up of representatives from:

- Nursing
- Occupational Therapy
- Physical Therapy
- Speech Therapy
- Recreational Therapy
- Clinical Care Management

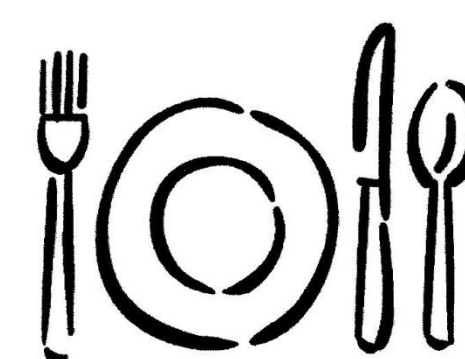
Restorative Dining Program

One of the ICPG's initiatives that has had a major impact on patient care is the development of the Restorative Dining Program (RDP). The RDP was developed to:

- Promote independence with feeding
- Promote compliance with swallowing strategies and diet modifications
- Reduce the risk of aspiration
- Increase performance with the use of adaptive equipment and environmental modifications
- Facilitate social interaction between patients
- Restore a sense of normalcy to meals



UNC Rehab Dining Room



RDP Symbol Placed on Patient's Door

At the heart of the RDP is collaboration between therapists, RNs, and NAs. Therapy team members take turns working in the dining room providing direct services to patients in individual or group settings during meals. Nursing staff is assigned to the dining room daily to provide additional assistance for patients.

Occupational Therapy and Speech-Language Pathology staff provide formal and informal staff education on feeding and swallowing, working to empower all staff members to encourage patients to be as independent as possible with self-feeding while maintaining safety during mealtimes.

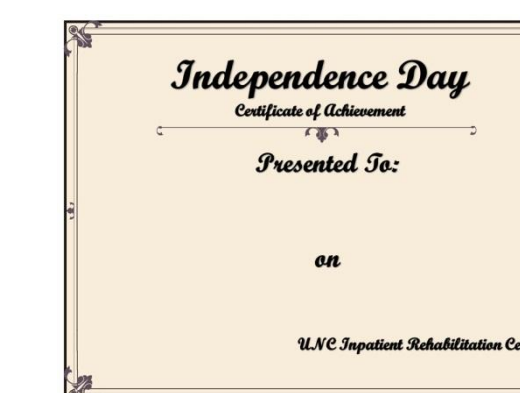
Independence Day

Another initiative implemented by the ICPG was the development of Independence Day for our patients. Each patient has his or her own Independence Day in the days prior to their discharge date. This day is designed to:

- Celebrate the patients' work toward recovery during their Rehab stay
- Acknowledge the patients' upcoming discharge from the Rehab Center
- Encourage and motivate other patients toward their own Independence Day



Independence Day Button



Certificate of Achievement



Door Sign

On the patients' Independence Day, they receive an "Independence Day" button and a Certificate of Achievement for their Rehab stay. The patients also have an "Independence Day" sign posted on their door so that staff and other patients know they are celebrating their Independence Day. Staff congratulate the patients and encourage them on their final day of Rehab. Our goal is to make patients feel celebrated and accomplished on their road to recovery.

Nursing and therapy staff are also encouraged to allow the patients to complete their activities as independently as possible on this day, allowing extra time if necessary. This allows staff to properly identify and document the patients' functionality on this day, thus providing accurate FIM scores and related documentation for outcome measures.

Success

The key to any team functioning well is to promote opportunities for working together and building programs that work toward common goals. Our interdisciplinary staff have risen to the challenge of creating and maintaining an environment that supports and encourages true teamwork. The collaboration shown by our Interdisciplinary Clinical Practice Group (ICPG) has been integral to our success in improving patient and staff satisfaction, as well as patient safety and quality of care.

Through providing an environment of teamwork at the smaller committee problem-solving level, our Rehabilitation Center has been able to translate this successful dynamic into the larger setting while equipping the entire group to address any future issues.

Interdisciplinary Clinical Practice Group Projects

Since its inception, the ICPG has worked on a number of projects to improve patient and staff safety and satisfaction.

These projects include:

- Developing a scheduling process for therapy
- Working with patient transportation to reduce the incidence of lost equipment
- Redesigning the quarterly skills fair to be more interdisciplinary and comprehensive
- Developing the Therapeutic Rest Program
- Implementing Lean Six Sigma principles

UNC Rehabilitation Center is a 30-bed inpatient facility which has received full accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF). Our mission is to optimize the health and function of individuals with physical and cognitive disabilities through a patient-centered, interdisciplinary continuum of care. Our Rehabilitation RNs provide quality care and support while focusing on health education and promotion, including bowel and bladder retraining, managing skin health, and other medical management needs.

References:

- Cournan, M. (2011). Use of the functional independence measure for outcomes measurement in acute inpatient rehabilitation. *Rehabilitation Nursing*, 36(3), 111-117.
- American Occupational Therapy Association. (2007) Specialized Knowledge and Skills in Feeding, Eating, and Swallowing for Occupational Therapy Practice. *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 61(6), 686-700.

Acknowledgements & Contact Information

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