



DISORDERS OF CONSCIOUSNESS PROGRAM

PURPOSE / GOALS

The Disorders of Consciousness (DOC) Program provides specific types of care and monitoring of persons who are in low-level states of consciousness resulting from brain injury.

The goal of the program is to help the person achieve an optimal physical state and monitor/evaluate their progress during this period of time. An average length of stay is four to six weeks, which allows for better decision making regarding future treatments and program placement.

ASSESSMENT

Shepherd Center's specially trained staff uses the Coma Recovery Scale-Revised to assess the patient's rate of emergence and response to his or her environment. This is done regularly during the week by an interdisciplinary team.

PATIENT TREATMENT

The DOC Program's interdisciplinary team works closely to facilitate the patient's recovery by offering an individualized plan of care that balances medication management, therapies, environmental stimulation and rest. The overall plan is organized around five major areas of care:

- Medical stabilization and health needs
- Nutrition
- Positioning/seating/mobility
- Arousal and communication
- Family/caregiver support and education

FAMILY-CENTERED CARE / TRAINING

During your loved one's stay, the program will provide opportunities for education, support and training to help you feel comfortable in caring for your loved one. Your training may consist of learning to stretch and position your loved one, administer medications and assess their level of consciousness. We provide education about the brain, brain injury and recovery. We understand that brain injury is a family injury, so we offer emotional and psychological support to you and your family through our family support groups and individual counseling.

DISCHARGE PLANNING AND SUPPORT

If the person's status has not improved to a point of emerging from a minimally conscious state, your case manager, along with other members of the treatment team, will help you to determine your options, which may be one of the following:

- 1) Care for the person at home with the assistance of home health care. If you go directly home from Shepherd Center, you will be assigned a Transition Support Coordinator (TSC) who will be available to the caregiver for 60 days after discharge to answer questions and provide support.
- 2) Have the person cared for in a facility that is licensed to manage patients with disorders of consciousness.

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