



Shepherd Center

# Hope is *Here*

With five decades of experience in rehabilitation, Shepherd Center provides world-class clinical care, research, and family support for people experiencing the most complex conditions, including spinal cord and brain injuries, multi-trauma, traumatic amputations, stroke, multiple sclerosis, pain, and other neurological conditions.







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## Hope is Here

In a time of crisis, it may be reassuring to know that another family has been in your shoes. The Shepherd family co-founded Shepherd Center in 1975 after their world changed in an instant.

While body surfing off a beach in Rio de Janeiro, James Shepherd, then 22, sustained a spinal cord injury and became paralyzed from the neck down. While James received acute care, his parents searched for rehabilitation options to give him the best chance at recovery and independence. At the time, options were limited, so James traveled from his hometown of Atlanta, Georgia, to receive care at a rehabilitation hospital across the country. James returned home with regained movement and restored hope.

Shortly after his return home, James and his parents, Alana and Harold, recruited Medical Director David Apple, M.D. and began plans to open Shepherd Center to provide world-class rehabilitative care.

Now, 50 years later, patients who have experienced a life-changing injury or illness and their families come to Shepherd Center from across the country and around the world.



## Why Shepherd?

### We're here for *you*.

After a spinal cord injury, brain injury, stroke, multi-trauma, or other complex neurological injury or illness, one of the most important decisions you can make is where to seek rehabilitation. At Shepherd Center, the lessons our founders learned — James, as a patient, and Harold and Alana as family members by their son's side — continue to shape Shepherd Center's patient and family-centered culture as we pursue our mission to help people with a temporary or permanent disability caused by injury or disease rebuild their lives with hope, independence, and dignity. We see beyond your injury and provide you with the expertise and support to achieve your goals.

*Read on to learn how we  
make our mission a reality. >>>*

Approximate  
number of  
patients  
served each  
year at  
Shepherd  
>>>

more than  
**950**  
inpatients

more than  
**8,000**  
outpatients



“The minute we got there, therapists started working with him. I had this tremendous sense of relief that things were progressing. God gave us so many miracles, and one of them was Shepherd Center. Thank you just doesn’t seem to be enough.”

- Mihret Hamda, Mother of  
**Ole Djalleta, Former Patient**

*Disorders of Consciousness Program  
and Brain Injury Rehabilitation Program*



Scan the QR code or visit  
Shepherd Center’s website  
to read more of Ole’s story.

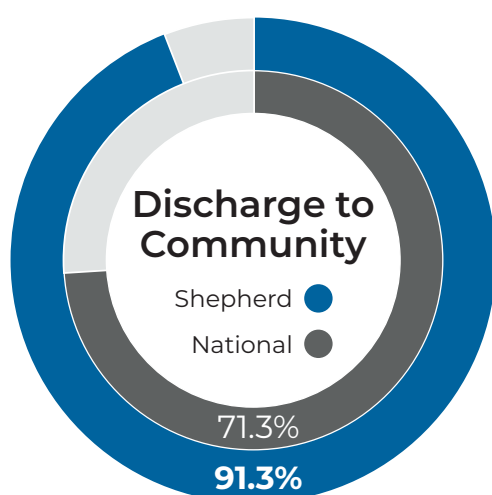


## Specialized Rehabilitation

When it comes to rehabilitation for catastrophic injury or illness, experience counts. Our specialization in caring for tens of thousands of people with the most complex conditions, including spinal cord and brain injuries, multi-trauma, traumatic amputations, stroke, multiple sclerosis, and pain, enables all of our staff to develop deeper levels of expertise, our facilities and equipment to be specific and extensive, and you to achieve better results. Simply put, it’s all we do, and we do it well.

## Exceptional Outcomes

At Shepherd Center, our expertise translates into positive outcomes and futures for patients. Patients at Shepherd typically return home instead of transferring to another care facility at a rate higher than the national average.



Data Source: Uniform Data System for  
Medical Rehabilitation (UDS) and Epic FY25



### Only 1 in 13 patients

needed rehospitalization within  
30 days of discharge from Shepherd  
Center. This rate is lower than that  
of similar hospitals, highlighting  
Shepherd’s focus on patient and  
family training and transition support.

Data Source: Uniform Data System for  
Medical Rehabilitation (UDS) and Epic FY25



Source: Press Ganey FY25

*At Shepherd Center, we often achieve outcomes that exceed the national average/benchmark.*

*For updated outcomes information, visit [shepherd.org/outcomes](https://shepherd.org/outcomes).*



## Patient- and Family-Centered Care

At Shepherd, we wrap our arms around you and your family.

- **Customized rehabilitation program:** You and your family are essential members of your rehabilitation team at Shepherd. Your care is tailored to help you pursue your personal goals and addresses your individual needs.
- **Training for your family:** Shepherd provides family members with training on all aspects of patient care through a combination of classes and hands-on training specific to each patient's needs. A website with videos and other training tools will continue to support you post-discharge.
- **Family support:** We encourage you and your family to take advantage of services like counseling, chaplaincy, and peer support and to participate in community-building activities like weekly patient and family dinners. In addition, a family support services coordinator is available to help your loved ones manage the logistics of life and work while you participate in rehabilitation.
- **Housing:** Families of patients who are admitted to one of our inpatient rehabilitation programs are eligible to stay in our new, state-of-the-art housing tower just a few blocks from Shepherd Center for the length of the inpatient stay if both the family and patient live more than 50 miles from Shepherd Center. It features 165 modern, wheelchair-accessible, fully furnished apartments with in-unit laundry. Families also have access to an on-site parking deck, meeting rooms, a gym, and recreational spaces. Parking at Shepherd facilities is always free.



**“I went to the right place. We had the best team of doctors and therapists. They really wanted me to thrive. They were the first people who made me believe that, yes, it might be more challenging to pursue my dreams, but I could absolutely figure out new ways to achieve them.”**

**- Chelsea Vietti, Former Patient**  
*Spinal Cord Injury Rehabilitation Program*



Scan the QR code or visit Shepherd Center's website to read more of Chelsea's story.





## National Recognition

Shepherd Center has been caring for patients like you for 50 years. An elite center ranked by *U.S. News* as one of the nation's top hospitals for rehabilitation, Shepherd Center is also recognized as both a Spinal Cord Injury and Traumatic Brain Injury Model System by the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research. The hospital is accredited by The Joint Commission and the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF).



## Intensive Care Unit

Shepherd Center is the only freestanding, specialized rehabilitation hospital nationwide with an on-site ICU.

### Why it Matters:

- » Shepherd's board-certified pulmonary/critical care specialists, skilled nurses, and expert respiratory therapists care for patients who require advanced medical management.
- » Shepherd can take patients earlier, so your rehabilitation can start quickly, even if you are in the ICU, reducing secondary complications and advancing recovery.
- » If you experience complications that necessitate a return to the ICU during your rehabilitation, you do not have to transfer to a different hospital. Shepherd can manage your care on-site.

## Ventilator Management and Weaning Program

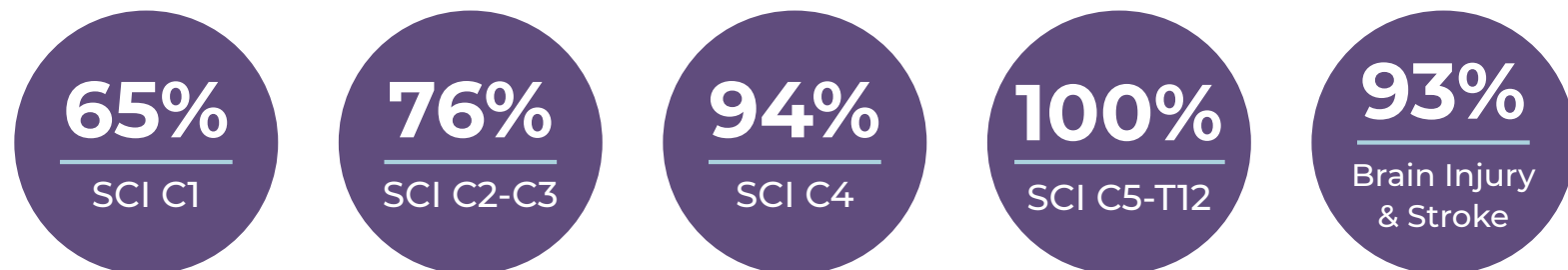
Shepherd Center's Ventilator Management and Weaning Program is led by an experienced team of respiratory therapists and pulmonologists who support increased independence, activity, and comfort.

### Why it Matters:

- » We use advanced techniques specific to individuals with brain and spinal cord injury and offer diaphragmatic pacing when appropriate to achieve exceptional weaning rates.
- » At Shepherd, patients using ventilators are not confined to the ICU. You can still attend therapy, go to the garden, take part in outings, and participate in other programming.
- » If needed, you and your family are trained in home-care techniques and health management, focusing on living an active lifestyle.

### Patients who were liberated from ventilators at Shepherd Center:

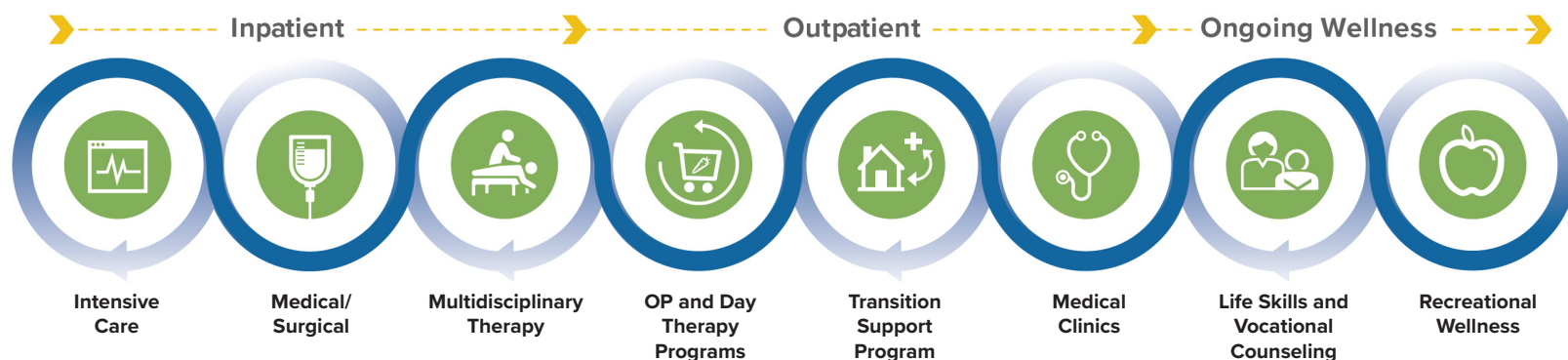
4-year (FY21-FY24) Ventilator Weaning Rates



Note: These represent full weaning only. If an individual needs a ventilator at night, they are not considered fully weaned.



## Continuum of Care - One Stop Care: Multiple Levels and Unique Services



Shepherd Center's comprehensive continuum of care focuses on beginning your rehabilitation as soon as possible to reduce secondary complications and accelerate community re-entry, which for many people means returning to home, work, school, or a supported community-living environment. Programs and services include:

- » 10-bed, on-site intensive care unit
- » Inpatient rehabilitation
- » Day and outpatient therapy programs
- » Medical-surgical services (medical management)
- » Ventilator weaning and respiratory management
- » Disorders of Consciousness Program for patients with low-level consciousness due to brain injury
- » Nutritional assessment and management
- » Psychology, neuropsychology, and counseling services
- » Patient and caregiver peer support
- » Chaplaincy for patient and family spiritual needs
- » Extensive family training
- » Assistive technology
- » Extensive recreation therapy and adaptive sports programs
- » Community reintegration outings
- » Health and wellness programs on-site, in the community, and virtually
- » Animal-assisted therapy with dogs and horses
- » Aquatic therapy in our 25-yard pool
- » Return-to-school programs and on-site academic coordinators
- » Life skills and vocational rehabilitation
- » Transitional living apartments for people with brain injury allowing for family training in preparation for discharge to home
- » Driving Education and Rehabilitation Program
- » Wheelchair Seating & Mobility Clinic
- » Outpatient Specialty Clinics
  - Rehabilitation Medicine Clinic
  - Shepherd Spine and Pain Institute
  - Upper Extremity Clinic
  - Urology Clinic

**"You know how every once in a while you meet someone and they're just a phenomenal human being, and it really blows you away? Think about how often that happens. Every once in a blue moon? At Shepherd, it was a daily occurrence. Somebody every day impressed me there. And I'm not too easy to impress. Everybody was kind. Everybody treated you like a human — not a patient or an account number."**

**- Earl Lyon, Husband of Amanda Lyon, Former Patient**  
*Spinal Cord Injury Rehabilitation Program*



Scan the QR code or visit Shepherd Center's website to read more of Amanda and Earl's story.







## Your Rehabilitation Team

At Shepherd, we take a team approach to your care. Shepherd staff help patients exceed national standards for rehabilitation outcomes, create new and innovative ways to care for our patients, and support patients and each other with our trademark humor, hope, and heart.

**You and your family are essential members of your rehabilitation team!**

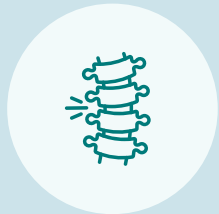




## Leading Edge Research and Innovation

Shepherd Center is a world-renowned research hub with researchers conducting studies in collaboration with leading experts and institutions from around the world. The hospital has, on average, 75 active clinical studies and works with 1,200 research participants a year. Whether studying a new device, testing a new medication, or developing new treatment methods, research at Shepherd Center is conducted daily in our clinics and gyms. It translates directly into improved care and quality of life for our patients and patients worldwide for generations to come.

### Shepherd Center's research falls into five areas:



Spinal  
Cord Injury  
Research



Brain Injury  
Research



Multiple  
Sclerosis  
Research



User  
Experience  
Research



Accessibility  
& Usability  
Research



Clinical  
Trials



Scan the QR code  
or visit Shepherd  
Center's website to  
learn more about our  
research efforts.





## Above and Beyond

Shepherd Center offers several services to patients and families that insurance does not cover and that are not readily available at other rehabilitation facilities. We are able to provide these services, which we believe are critical to helping patients thrive, through the support of generous donors.



### Facility Dog Program

- » Allows specially trained furry friends to participate in therapy in a fun and unique way



### Peer Support Program

- » Provides one-on-one and community support for you and your family





### Recreation Therapy Program

- » Helps restore and rehabilitate your level of function, independence, and involvement in life using activities and tools, like an outing to an event, an adaptive tennis lesson, or an art class



### Assistive Technology

- » Increases, maintains, or improves your functional capabilities post-injury or illness using high- and low-tech equipment to access electronics, control your environment, increase your mobility, and even drive



### Family Housing

- » Enables loved ones to be nearby during your entire rehabilitation journey — supporting your recovery and allowing Shepherd staff to provide them with education and training in preparation for your return home



### Vocational Rehabilitation

- » Helps you identify any challenges in returning to work or school, practice problem-solving, learn to self-advocate, and find available career resources in your community





## Spinal Cord Injury Rehabilitation

From admission through outpatient follow-up, our Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) Rehabilitation Program provides a full continuum of care to people with any level of spinal cord injury, including those who use ventilators to breathe or have a dual diagnosis of a spinal cord and brain injury. As a national leader in spinal cord injury rehabilitation, medical care, and research, Shepherd Center examines ways to improve the quality of life and maximize independence for people who have experienced a spinal cord injury (SCI).

Your care team works collaboratively to design a personalized plan to help prevent complications and help you recover as much function as possible. We strive to ensure you and your family are integral to your recovery team. The average age of our patients with spinal cord injury is 41, giving you and your family the benefit of camaraderie with peers at similar life stages.

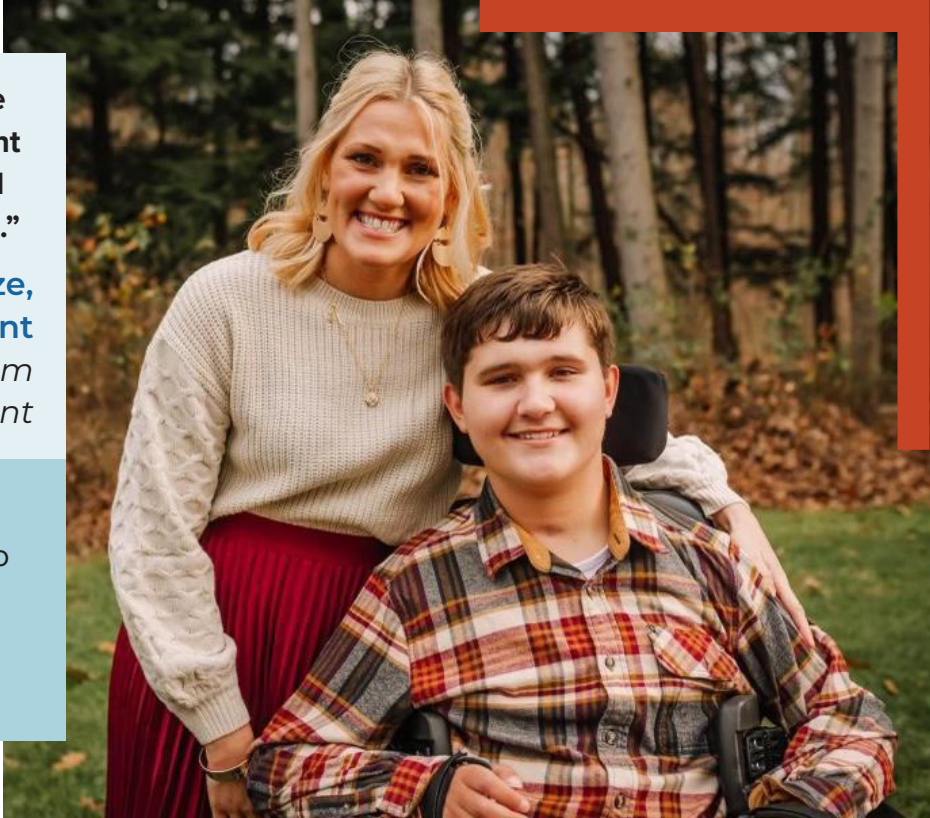


“I wanted to be confident by the time we left. We were well prepared, and the transition home went so much smoother than I expected. It’s because I was part of everything directly alongside Carson.”

- Alexis Schulze,  
Mother of Carson West, Former Patient  
Spinal Cord Injury Rehabilitation Program  
and HiTe Program participant



Scan the QR code or visit  
Shepherd Center’s website to  
read more of Carson’s story.



## High-Tetraplegia Program (HiTe Program)

- » Created with the needs of patients with high-level spinal cord injuries — C1–C4 — in mind
- » Provides education on breathing assistance, bowel and bladder management, specialized equipment, caregiver assistance, assistive technology, animal assistance programs, and emergency preparedness
- » Includes an activities-based treatment group focused on respiratory strengthening with functional electrical stimulation, practice using an automated self-feeding device, and opportunities for community outings twice a month

To learn more about the HiTe Program, visit [news.shepherd.org/reaching-new-hites](https://news.shepherd.org/reaching-new-hites). 

## Adulting Program

- » Created to support young adult patients preparing to launch into the next phase of life
- » Includes mixers with facilitated discussions on relevant topics like financial planning and relationships
- » Includes community outings as a group
- » Helps patients establish peer-to-peer support and connection, leverage expert guidance, increase awareness of resources, and experience opportunities to apply new knowledge







## Adolescent Program

Each year, approximately 75 adolescents and young adults, ages 12 to 21, come to Shepherd Center from all over the country to participate in spinal cord injury rehabilitation as inpatients or continue through our day program.

- » Offers specialized treatment teams and age-appropriate therapy
- » Provides a unique environment for teens and young adults with a strong peer support system
- » Incorporates social activities such as Spirit Week, Fun Fridays, Prom, and creating a haunted house for Halloween, that augment traditional therapy
- » Supports the involvement of your family and friends
- » Focuses on helping you develop a healthy lifestyle with the highest possible level of function and independence
- » Includes our “No Obstacles” return-to-school program led by a certified teacher and other staff members to help ease your transition back to school and help you stay on track to reach academic goals





## Brain Injury Rehabilitation

Shepherd Center's Brain Injury Rehabilitation Program provides a full continuum of services for patients who have experienced a traumatic brain injury (TBI) or non-traumatic brain injury. For people in a low-level state of consciousness caused by brain injury, our Disorders of Consciousness (DoC) Program is one of only a few dedicated programs nationwide providing specialized treatment services that allow pre-rehabilitation and family training to begin before your loved one fully emerges.

Our experts are highly trained leaders in the field of brain injury rehabilitation. They provide patient-focused care rooted in leading-edge treatments, technologies, and research. Beyond treating your immediate needs, our clinicians recognize that every brain injury is as unique as the person and family it affects. Shepherd Center's team develops a personalized plan to help you set and reach your goals while providing family training, education, and support for returning home. Peer support for caregivers, licensed marriage and family counseling, and chaplaincy are available to provide much-needed support to your family.

As a specialized facility, the average age of our patients with brain injuries is 37, giving you and your family the benefit of camaraderie with peers at similar life stages.

### Vision Clinic

- » Allows for early intervention to maximize improvement after a brain injury
- » Provides collaborative care, including a neuro-optometrist, an occupational therapist, and a physiatrist
- » Supports your goals in balance and mobility, reading and writing, fine motor work, performance in activities of daily living, returning to driving, and other life tasks





**“This kid could barely open his eyes, and within 24 hours, Shepherd had him saying ‘mom’ — and by June 24th, he was a chatterbox,”**

**- Angie Franjul, Mother of  
Joshua Franjul, Former Patient**  
*Disorders of Consciousness Program and  
Brain Injury Rehabilitation Program*



Scan the QR code or visit Shepherd Center’s website to read more of Joshua’s story.



## Disorders of Consciousness (DoC) Program

- » Provides pre-rehabilitation services to accommodate your loved one’s need for rest, structure, appropriate stimulation, medical stabilization, and management of health needs
- » Supports families/caregivers with counseling, education, and training
- » Prioritizes frequent/close monitoring to gauge progress



## Adolescent Rehabilitation

- » Offers specialized treatment teams, age-appropriate therapy, and expertise in treating teens and young adults
- » Focuses on helping your teen develop a healthy lifestyle with the highest possible level of function and independence
- » Offers extensive support for your family, including a psychologist, licensed marriage and family therapist, chaplains, and family peer support

If an adolescent progresses to Pathways, Shepherd’s comprehensive outpatient rehabilitation program for people recovering from brain injury:

- » Includes comprehensive evaluations to identify cognitive and physical challenges and attain treatment goals, including improvement in reading comprehension, listening skills, speech, writing, memory, and motor skills
- » May include opportunities to join outings with other adolescent rehabilitation participants
- » Assists schools in preparing individual education plans and educating professionals on cognitive and behavioral issues related to brain injuries





## Stroke Rehabilitation

Shepherd Center's Stroke Rehabilitation Program specializes in the most complex strokes and those occurring in younger people. The average age of our patients who have experienced a stroke is 51. Still, the program serves all ages, beginning with adolescents, giving you and your family the benefit of camaraderie with peers at similar life stages.

The stroke care team focuses on helping you relearn skills lost when a stroke injures a part of your brain. Shepherd leverages state-of-the-art medical care, technology, and comprehensive educational services to develop individualized blueprints for each patient. The rehabilitation plan is designed to meet your physical, cognitive, medical, and emotional needs while working toward independence in school, work, driving, parenting, and community involvement. This integrated approach to care includes education and training, and involves you and your family in decision-making and setting recovery goals.

## Vision Clinic

- » Allows for early intervention to maximize improvement after a stroke
- » Provides collaborative care, including a neuro-optometrist, an occupational therapist, and a physiatrist
- » Supports your goals in balance and mobility, reading and writing, fine motor work, performance in activities of daily living, returning to driving, and other life tasks

**"Everyone at Shepherd Center, what they do for patients just shows how much they care. They make you feel confident, and it's such a holistic approach. I have so much respect for what they do."**

**- Cynthia Trawick, Former Patient**  
*Stroke Rehabilitation Program*



Scan the QR code or visit Shepherd Center's website to read more of Cynthia's story.





## Rehabilitation for Other Conditions

Each year, many patients who come to Shepherd Center need care for multiple injuries or illnesses resulting from a single event. At Shepherd, our staff is highly skilled in treating people who have sustained multiple traumatic injuries or complicated diagnoses of neurological diseases or disorders, including even the most severe cases of transverse myelitis and Guillain-Barré syndrome (GBS).

If participants in any of our inpatient rehabilitation programs develop complications such as pressure injuries, spasticity, or respiratory conditions associated with spinal cord and brain injuries, we are equipped to support them.

### Dual Diagnosis (Spinal Cord and Brain Injury)

- » Provides therapy within Brain Injury and/or Spinal Cord injury Rehabilitation Programs
- » Focuses on regaining movement and strength and treating learning and memory challenges
- » Provides a treatment plan that has your specific needs in mind



### Traumatic Amputations

- » Focuses on maximizing independence with activities of daily living (e.g., bathing, dressing, grooming, etc.), home and community mobility, strengthening, and pre-prosthetic training
- » Works with orthotists and prosthetists to begin prosthetic fitting and training while you participate in inpatient rehabilitation

### Guillain-Barré Syndrome (GBS)

- » Accepts patients early, even if you still use a ventilator to breathe
- » Provides rapid response with repeat immunomodulatory treatments if your condition declines, avoiding disruption of important strides made in therapy
- » Prioritizes therapy to regain strength, mobility, and endurance





## What to Expect

### Upon Arrival

- » Meet our admissions staff and your dedicated case manager.
- » Make yourself at home in your room. Rest up after your travels.
- » Your loved ones will tour therapy rooms, dining areas, and common spaces.

### Within 24 Hours

- » Meet your rehabilitation team (if you're admitted directly to our ICU, you'll meet the ICU medical and rehabilitation staff).
- » If medically cleared, get out of bed, get dressed in comfortable clothes, and get into a semi-custom wheelchair to explore your surroundings.
- » Consult with your dietitian about your nutrition needs and goals.

### While You're Here

- » Your attending physician and dedicated nurses will assist you with any medical needs you may have, so that you'll be at your best to focus on making progress in therapy.
- » Your therapists will collaborate with the rest of your care team to develop and implement your personalized treatment plan based on your recovery goals.
- » Your case manager will work with you and your family to make sure all the necessary arrangements are in place for a confident and safe discharge to your home.



**“We arrived at 1 p.m. and by 6 p.m., we were settled in our room, and my husband was already seen by the entire team. We were impressed with how organized and prepared Shepherd was to start treatment immediately.”**

**- Licia Borges, Wife of Alexander Borges, Former Patient**  
*Brain Injury Rehabilitation Program*



Scan the QR code or visit Shepherd Center's website to read more of Alexander and Licia's story.





## A Typical Week at Shepherd

- » Get out of bed and manage your morning routine with the assistance of the nursing staff.
- » Participate in 3-5 hours of intensive, personalized therapy, Monday through Friday, with reduced hours on Saturday. Sunday is your day off to rest and recharge!
  - Therapy may include physical, occupational, speech, and recreational therapy, as well as education and training, assistive technology support, neuropsychology, and mental health counseling.
- » Participate in individual and group outings to practice skills you'll need in your community.
- » Your team will work with you and your family to set goals, coordinate your care, and track your progress.



## Personal Items to Bring

Having some personal items from home can make you feel more comfortable during your stay at Shepherd Center. Here are some items we recommend bringing with you:



Comfy, loose-fitting clothing



Athletic shoes



Favorite sweater or jacket



Pajamas



Favorite shampoo & toiletries



List of all medications



Books or other hobby items



Photos & cards to decorate your room



Snuggly blanket



Something that makes you smile

Before your transfer, your case manager will provide a more detailed list of what to bring, including toiletries, clothing, and medical records.



## Visitors

Shepherd Center encourages support from family and friends. Our visitation guidelines are as follows:

- » Designated caregivers are welcome anytime.
- » Other visitors are welcome between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m., so you can get plenty of rest.
- » Visitors under 18 must be supervised by an adult visitor.
- » No more than two visitors are allowed at your bedside. You can visit with larger groups in various indoor and outdoor spaces on Shepherd's campus, if medically cleared.
- » Only one visitor may spend the night in your room at a time.

*Visitation guidelines are subject to change.*

## Parking

- » Free, convenient, covered parking is available for you and your loved ones 24/7.
- » ADA parking is available on every garage level, with van-accessible spaces on the ground level.
- » Each parking deck level has elevator access to the hospital.
- » Designated areas are available for pick-up and drop-off.
- » Visitors can borrow transport chairs from our Security Desk if needed.
- » Electric vehicle charging stations are available in the parking deck.





## Admissions

### How to Make a Referral

- » Physicians, case managers, hospital discharge planners, social workers, insurance companies, or workers' compensation case managers can refer patients to Shepherd Center.
- » A patient's family member may submit a referral inquiry to initiate the process.

Our Access Case Managers can begin the admissions process anywhere in the United States within 24 hours of referral on business days. We offer this service free of charge and often serve as the referring facility's primary educator and resource for family members. We will guide you and your loved ones through the admissions process.

### Contact Our Admissions Team



#### Online

Learn more by scanning the QR codes below:



*Healthcare  
Professionals*



*Patients/  
Families*



#### By Phone or Fax

##### *Inpatient Referrals:*

- » Call 1-800-SHEPHERD (800-743-7437)  
or fax 404-603-4504  
(8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday)

##### *Outpatient Referrals:*

- » Call 404-352-2020 (8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday-Friday)

### Visit Us



To familiarize yourself with Shepherd Center, we are happy to offer your family a personalized tour of the hospital before patient admission.

For more information about tours, visit:

- » [shepherd.org/about/tour-shepherd](https://shepherd.org/about/tour-shepherd)

*and for a virtual tour,  
scan this QR code:*



### Location



#### Shepherd Center

2020 Peachtree Road, NW  
Atlanta, GA 30309-1465  
404-352-2020 [shepherd.org](https://shepherd.org)

Shepherd Center is located five miles north of downtown Atlanta in the Buckhead community. Shepherd Center is approximately 30 minutes from Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport and is accessible by public transportation.

- » *For directions, visit [shepherd.org/location](https://shepherd.org/location).*





Shepherd Center





Shepherd  
Center



Shepherd Center has materials and online programs to help individuals and families learn about spinal cord injury, brain injury, stroke, multi-trauma and other neurological conditions, and where to go for help.

For more information, visit  
**[shepherd.org](http://shepherd.org)** or  
**[myshepherdconnection.org](http://myshepherdconnection.org)**



### Things to Consider When Selecting a Rehabilitation Facility:

- » Does the hospital specialize in your particular injury or illness, or are they a general facility?
- » What is the average age of patients in the programs?
- » What percentage of patients return home or to the community rather than to a long-term care facility?
- » What housing is available for family members?
- » Is there family training and support?