

Produced by the Marketing
Department of HealthSouth

HEALTHSOUTH

Nittany Valley Rehabilitation Hospital

550 W. COLLEGE AVE. PLEASANT GAP, PA 16823 814 359-3421 NITTANYVALLEYREHAB.COM



HEALTHSOUTH NITTANY VALLEY REHABILITATION HOSPITAL

Your choice for rehab.

Sustaining the Positive Patient Experience

HealthSouth Nittany Valley is proud to announce a successful second quarter 2010 at the 99th percentile for patient satisfaction as measured by Press Ganey for our 100 Hospital Company.

We are even more excited to be leading our company in both patient satisfaction and clinical outcomes coming in 1st in the region for both and 1st in patient satisfaction and 3rd in clinical outcomes for all HealthSouth hospitals.

Because patient experience is one of the most important indicators of quality care, program outcome and services, the staff and leadership at HealthSouth Nittany Valley plan to continue to reset our internal goals and expectations in order to maintain our achievement over time.

Two years ago the HealthSouth Nittany Valley patient experience group (PEG) formed to respond to issues specific to the care of the rehab patient that impact patient satisfaction and overall patient experience. The group meets weekly to discuss priority topics and to develop and implement solutions. Their mission is to improve patient, family, employee and referral source perception and to impact our overall volume and patient satisfaction. The PEG team uses articles and information about best practices to learn more about responding to quality issues, workplace redesign and the overall patient experience.

One of the priority issues that the team addresses each week is the concept of sustainability with the programs and initiatives that have already been started. The team captures feedback from various sources throughout the hospital in order to make an immediate impact and so that they do not have to wait for Press Ganey results. This feedback can come from a PEG team brainstorming session, staff, patients, visitors or referral sources. The fact that the team meets weekly allows for timely response to issues and is another key to sustainability.

Some important initiatives include environmental issues such as noise control, first impressions, room design, signage and assigning an admissions nurse to be at the bedside within 15 minutes of the patient arrival to begin the onboarding and orientation process. The admissions nurse

helps to develop an understanding of getting into a rehab state of mind, begins to assess the patient's needs and provides safety orientation. The orientation process helps to reduce any misconceptions about what to expect from therapy programs. The team takes the opportunity to recognize members of the hospital staff each week for patient interactions and positive impact on the patient experience. They are recognized for work that exemplifies "making a difference". According to team member Dave Pellerano, this is one of several very important functions of the team because the staff that makes the difference gets public acknowledgement in front of their peers while on the job. This recognition is in the form of a visit from the team and a certificate thanking them for their consistent efforts in the area of patient experience.

Continued on page 2

HealthSouth Awarded Joint Commission Certifications

HealthSouth Nittany Valley Rehabilitation Hospital is very proud to announce that the hospital was recently awarded disease-specific care certifications by the Joint Commission.

HealthSouth Nittany Valley earned the Gold Seal of Approval for healthcare quality for its heart failure, brain injury and stroke rehabilitation programs.

To earn these certifications, the three rehabilitation programs underwent an extensive, on-site evaluation by a Joint Commission reviewer. The programs were evaluated against Joint Commission standards through an assessment of the program and processes and ability to improve outcomes through established program criteria.

HealthSouth Nittany Valley intends to pursue additional Disease-Specific care certifications in areas such as Parkinson's and Multiple Sclerosis in order to continue to bring state-of-the-art rehabilitation services to the region.

HealthSouth Technology Spotlight

The **Gait Mate** is an extension of the Interactive Metronome which is used to assess and treat **motor planning, sequencing, coordination and balance**. It allows the patient to work on these neurological processes while walking around the gym or up and down the hall.

The therapist inserts a wireless insole into the patient's shoe that detects when the patient's heel strikes the ground. The patient hears a beat through wireless headphones and is asked to match the speed provided. The Gait Mate provides the patient with real-time auditory feedback as they walk, directing them to adjust their steps if they are walking too slow, too fast, right-on, or if their steps are uneven.

The Gait Mate also provides visual feedback on the computer screen so the patient can see if their speed and step lengths need to be adjusted. Repetition is essential to

improving the quality of a movement, particularly walking. The Gait Mate provides the repetition while it engages the patient and gives them constant, real-time feedback about their performance. As they adjust their walking, it continues to instruct them so that they are constantly improving and exercising. The Gait Mate improves a patient's stride length, heel strike, endurance, weight shifting, and quality of movement.

We have seen excellent results in our own gym with patients with diagnoses of CVA, balance dysfunction, amputation, and fractures in the lower extremity. It is also an excellent tool to treat diagnoses of Parkinson's, Multiple Sclerosis, Traumatic Brain Injury, and overall gait dysfunction.

To learn more about Gait Mate, call HealthSouth's inpatient hospital at 814 359-3421 or the Pleasant Gap Outpatient Clinic at 814-359-5630.

Centre County Outpatient Clinic Referrals

HealthSouth Pleasant Gap now takes referrals for patients in the Centre County area who were formerly using the HealthSouth Bellefonte location, a result of a consolidation of services to one multi-service location in Pleasant Gap.

Outpatient services include Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech Therapy, Vestibular Rehab, Hand Therapy, Functional Capacity Evaluations and DriveABLE, a cognitive driving assessment.

Some of the diagnoses we treat include pulmonary, sports injuries, work injuries, stroke, arthritis, balance disorders, swallowing disorders, back injuries, hand injuries, fractures and total joint replacements. Our therapy staff will design an individualized therapy program to meet your specific needs.

Your comprehensive rehabilitation program may include technologies such as the AutoAmbulator; VitalStim swallowing therapy; Interactive Metronome Neuro-Motor Therapy; Bioness Neuroprosthetic Rehabilitation System and SaebFlex Functional Dynamic Neurological Orthoses.

Call our clinic at 814 359-5630 to schedule an appointment or to learn more about how HealthSouth's personal, individualized care can help you return to work, to play, to living.

We accept Medicare, Medicaid and most commercial insurances.

HealthSouth Nittany Valley welcomes Joann Graham to marketing team

Joann Graham, RN, has joined the team at HealthSouth Nittany Valley as a rehabilitation liaison. A graduate of the Central Pennsylvania School of Nursing, Joann's clinical background includes PACU, case management, utilization review and quality management.

She lives in Woodland with her husband, with whom she has two sons, ages 24 and 22, and a black lab named Buddy. She enjoys reading, traveling, and spending time with her family.

Joann is the liaison for the Clearfield-Philipsburg areas and also provides back-up coverage for Mount Nittany Medical Center. She can be reached at 814 574-8303.



Joann Graham, RN

HealthSouth hits a home run!

See story on page 4

Sustaining the Positive Patient Experience — continued from pg 1

A positive hospitalwide awareness campaign recently came in the form of employee commitment day. The day was designed as another opportunity to reinforce the patient experience activities in a sustainable way and will continue as an annual event and commitment. All staff were treated to a hospital provided meal and had the opportunity to sign a framed commitment to ensuring the positive patient experience. The framed and signed commitment is hanging in the hospital lobby to remind everyone each day of what it means to promise a great patient experience.

Recently some "Hot Button" behaviors were identified that could result in negative patient perception. These items were discussed in staff meetings and forums to identify more appropriate behaviors. Included in the hot button behaviors are not socializing

in front of patients, ensuring a positive first impression, avoiding any reference to staffing issues, acknowledging family members/visitors, giving patients a chance to determine their outcomes, not undermining co-workers and exhibiting empathy.

At HealthSouth we look at the Press Ganey results from many different perspectives and were very happy to note that we have some excellent scores provided by patients discharged after rehab for lower extremity fracture 95.4 percent and orthopedics 90.7 percent. This type of data will help us continue to focus on our specialized programs and to continue to provide the excellent services our patients and referral sources desire. An important ceremony at HealthSouth Nittany Valley is the discharge ceremony which involves the patient receiving a

certificate of achievement surrounded by family and HealthSouth staff in the lobby. Once the patient has been presented with their award they are asked to ring the HealthSouth healing bell as a signal of closure on this leg of the rehab journey. The PEG team is always reinforcing the need to be present and participate in the discharge ceremony because it is important for sustainability and has a noticeable impact on survey results.

The PEG team and leadership team at HealthSouth Nittany Valley invite you as an employee, patient, visitor, friend or referral source to tell us how we can make your patient experience even better by sharing your ideas and experiences.

Call us today at 814 359-3421 and ask for Tracy Ewing or Jeri Webster.

HealthSouth welcomes Home Health providers at Outreach Breakfast

HealthSouth Nittany Valley marketing team member Barb Angelo, LPN, COTA, Rehab Liaison, coordinated an outreach breakfast held on July 28 for 30 Home Health and Home Services agency representatives.

The purpose was to network with community health care partners and to educate the group about technology and services such as DriveABLE and Interactive Metro-nome as well as HealthSouth Nittany Valley's Joint Commission program certifications for Brain Injury, Stroke and Heart Failure.

Presenters included Sharon Poorman, RN, Nurse Manager; Traci Curtorillo, RN, Nurse Manager; Tracy Everhart, OT, Pleasant Gap Outpatient Clinic Site Coordinator; and Tracy Ewing, RN, Director of Marketing Operations.

Top photo, Tracy Everhart, OT, Pleasant Gap Outpatient Clinic Site Coordinator, demonstrates the DriveABLE test, which offers individuals with potentially life-altering diagnoses the opportunity to participate in the decision-making process and the chance to be more proactive about the decision to retire from driving or return to driving when medically stable. To refer someone for a driving assessment, contact HealthSouth Pleasant Gap Outpatient Rehabilitation Clinic at 814 359-5630 for an appointment. Bottom photo, Tracy Ewing, RN, Director, Marketing Operations, speaks to the group about the recent accomplishment of HealthSouth Nittany Valley in attaining triple disease-specific certification in Brain Injury, Heart Failure, and Stroke from the Joint Commission.



Annual Stroke Recovery Picnic deemed a success



Smith Lyday and Sally Desmarais joined in the fun at the annual Stroke Recovery Picnic by donning red, white and blue to match the patriotic theme.

Another successful Stroke Recovery Picnic is in the books! We had a record turnout of just over 70 guests this year, the sixth year for the annual event held in HealthSouth's garden area.

Former patients were the "stars" of the stars-and-stripes themed event, where they enjoyed great food, listened to the Nittany Knights barbershop chorus, and visited with their former therapists, nurses, and members of the HealthSouth Stroke Rehab Team.

For stroke survivors, HealthSouth Nittany Valley offers a unique combination of both traditional and technological therapeutic advances to provide individualized stroke recovery plans based on specific patient needs. We provide an average of three hours of therapy a day, five to six days a week, depending on

the patient's level.

In addition, we offer new technology-based therapy utilizing specialized computer software and balance platforms, body-weight supported treadmill training, voice generating systems, dynamic wrist hand splinting stations, gait assessment training systems, and visual field training.

While incidents of stroke may be on the rise, HealthSouth is working hard to make sure those who experience a stroke get the therapy they need to return home and maintain an independent lifestyle. The Stroke Recovery Picnic celebrates those who have received rehabilitation at HealthSouth, as well as their friends, families, healthcare providers and other members of their recovery support network.

HealthSouth hits a Home Run with Brain Injury education

HealthSouth Nittany Valley Rehabilitation Hospital supports Spikes Baseball and its 'Kids Run the Bases' Promotion!

HealthSouth has distributed more than two thousand Brain Injury Education flyers this season to ballpark attendees, providing valuable information from the Department of Health and Human Services Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in an effort to educate the community on signs and symptoms of a concussion or brain injury.



Disease-Specific Care Certifications by The Joint Commission

- **STROKE**
- **BRAIN INJURY**
- **HEART FAILURE**

We Make House Calls For You

If you have a patient in need of rehabilitation services, our team of liaisons at HealthSouth Nittany Valley can assist you with home visits to screen patients for inpatient or outpatient admission for rehabilitation services. The rehabilitation liaison assesses the home or community situation, and reports this information back to the care provider who made the referral.

The rehabilitation liaison then completes a screening instrument to determine if inpatient services are indicated and review that screening instrument with a rehabilitation physician for final approval. The physician is interested in both medical and functional stability and may request documentation from the primary care provider or specialists involved in the care of the referral patient. The rehabilitation liaison facilitates the request for any additional information.

Turnaround time for this process can be the same day as a referral to the HealthSouth admissions staff at 814 359-3421. Admissions staff can facilitate insurance verification and initiate insurance precertification while the screening procedures are occurring. Inpatient admissions can occur the same day for many patients and some insurances make same-day or next-day decisions.

HEALTHSOUTH
Nittany Valley Rehabilitation Hospital

550 West College Avenue Pleasant Gap, PA 16823 814 359-3421
NittanyValleyRehab.com

Making strides in the community

HealthSouth Nittany Valley is once again participating in the Centre County Heart Walk, slated for Oct. 16. The HealthSouth team leader is Kathy Marino, rehabilitation liaison. We are also forming a team for the Memory Walk, planned for Oct. 2, to support Alzheimer's Disease research. Team leader for HealthSouth is Barb Angelo, rehabilitation liaison. If you would like to join the HealthSouth teams, or make a contribution toward the team's total donation, please call Jeri Webster at 814 359-5607.

HealthSouth nurses attain CRRN designation

HealthSouth would like to congratulate Susan (Dabby) Slemmons and Barbara Myers for their recent achievement of Certified Rehabilitation Registered Nurse, CRRN.



Susan (Dabby) Slemmons Barbara Myers

Susan attended Penn State, received a diploma in nursing from Mercy Hospital, Altoona, and came to HealthSouth in 1998 after working for six years in cardiac care and home nursing.

Susan said, "Rehabilitation became important to me as a result of working with critically ill patients young and old, and realizing the need for restorative nursing in all health care settings."

Traci Curtorillo, RN, Nurse Manager, said, "Attaining CRRN credentials is quite an important accomplishment and one way we are committed to getting better outcomes for our patients."

Barbara is a graduate of West Branch High School, and served in the U.S. Army, where she worked in the pharmacy. She received her nursing degree from Lock Haven University in 1995 and immediately began her career at HealthSouth Nittany Valley.

Barb said, "Rehabilitation nursing has always been a passion of mine. There is no greater feeling than knowing that you have personally had such an immense impact on someone's life. You have helped them get 'back to work, to play, to living!' It is truly a phenomenal experience."

Sharon Poorman, RN, Nurse Manager, said, "Research shows that having specialized Rehabilitation RNs at the bedside improves patient outcomes."

HealthSouth is proud of the achievements of Susan and Barb, and look forward to congratulating many more CRRN credential recipients in the future.