

Spinal Cord Injury Center

The Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) Center has provided inpatient and outpatient services to veterans with SCI, dysfunction or multiple sclerosis since August 1996.



This 65,000 square-foot complex contains a comprehensive array of facilities and disciplines that SCI patients ordinarily require. Staff includes physicians and nurses specially trained in the care of SCI-related problems. Additionally, an interdisciplinary team of rehabilitation experts works exclusively with SCI patients. The team is composed of physical therapists, occupational therapists, recreation therapists, nurses, physician assistants, psychologist, psychology assistant and social workers as well as driving instructor, dietitian, pharmacist and chaplain. Physician team members include: physiatrists, urologist, plastic surgeon and internist. All other medical and surgical specialists are available if needed.

The SCI Center includes a 30-bed nursing unit, rehabilitation therapy areas, self-contained transitional living apartment, recreation therapy facilities, horticultural center, dining room, pharmacy, complete genitourinary suite, outpatient clinic and staff offices. Rehabilitation facilities also include driver training equipment, swimming pool and gymnasium.

The SCI Center provides life-long comprehensive care. For newly injured patients, early post-injury management is provided, including any post-acute surgery. When medically stable, the newly injured

receive an aggressive rehabilitation program aimed at maximizing the patient's physical and psychological independence. This program is fully accredited by the Rehabilitation Accreditation Commission.

Beyond the initial rehabilitation phase, the SCI team provides medical and rehabilitation follow-up care, including primary care and specialty care, in areas where SCI patients are prone to experience unique problems. Services are also coordinated with SCI support clinics in Temple, Fort Worth and Bonham to provide easier access to care in the veteran's community. Telemedicine, primary care, home care and rehabilitation are offered through SCI outpatient services.

In 2005, SCI was awarded a five-year multi-center clinical trial of the implementation and evaluation of a new vocational rehabilitation program for veterans with SCI. The SCI Vocational Integration Program (SCI-VIP) seeks to enhance the overall quality of care resulting in improved rehabilitation outcomes and patient satisfaction. Of six VA Medical Centers participating across the country, VA North Texas Health Care System serves as the coordinating center.

Paralyzed Veterans of America, especially the Dallas Lone Star Chapter, is actively involved in the Center.