



< An artist's rendering of the proposed Carolinus Rehabilitation-NorthEast.

Expanding our reach

Carolinus Rehabilitation proposes new 40-bed hospital

In a move that promises to offer better, more convenient rehabilitation care for the communities we serve, Carolinus HealthCare System and Stanly Regional Medical Center have jointly sought approval from the State of North Carolina to build a 40-bed rehabilitation hospital on the campus of Carolinus Medical Center-NorthEast in Concord.

The two-story facility, to be called Carolinus Rehabilitation-NorthEast, would employ approximately 90 people, have 40 beds, comprise 55,400 square feet and cost an estimated \$25 million.

BENEFITS FOR OUR COMMUNITIES

“Our goal with Carolinus Rehabilitation-NorthEast is to duplicate the tremendous success of Carolinus Rehabilitation-Mount Holly, a similar inpatient rehabilitation hospital that opened last year,” says Michael Tarwater, CEO of Carolinus HealthCare System. “Our partnership with Stanly Regional allows us to provide specialized rehabilitation services at a central location easily accessible to the residents of Rowan, Stanly and Cabarrus counties. Placing the facility on the campus of CMC-

NorthEast also provides easy access to other medical specialties, should patients need those services.”

A SPECIAL PARTNERSHIP

“During the past 13 years, Stanly Regional has enjoyed a great relationship with CHS in the management and medical direction of our inpatient rehab unit,” says Al Taylor, President and CEO of Stanly Regional. “Since inpatient rehab is a regional service, CHS has given us a unique opportunity to offer a broader scope of inpatient rehabilitation services to patients from Stanly County and other locations throughout the region.”

The request to build—called a certificate of need, or CON—was filed this summer, with a final determination to be made by the NC Department of Health and Human Services’ Division of Health Service Regulation later this year. If the CON is approved, groundbreaking will occur next summer, with a grand opening in January 2011. ■



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An amazing comeback

How Carolinas Rehabilitation helped William Walker recover from a TBI

It was the news no parent wants to hear. At 7:30 a.m. on March 19, the North Carolina Highway Patrol informed the Rev. David and April Walker that their 24-year-old son, William, crashed his truck after hitting a large pool of standing oil on a local road.

“We were told William was airlifted to the Trauma Unit at Carolinas Medical Center,” April says. “At the time, we didn’t know the extent of his injuries, but we hoped for the best. After all, he was wearing his seatbelt and only driving 35 miles an hour.”

The news, however, wasn’t good. When April and David arrived at

CMC, doctors told them their son had sustained severe injuries and suffered from a traumatic brain injury (TBI), putting him in a coma.

KEEPING THE FAITH

“The doctors told us William probably wouldn’t survive due to the severity of his injuries,” says April, a registered nurse. “However, we decided to go through with all of the surgeries despite the poor prognosis. What did we have to lose?”

“Between David’s emotional support and my medical expertise, we were prepared to take William home no matter his surgical outcome,” April continues. “We wouldn’t let him end up in a nursing home at 24 years old.”

William stayed in the Trauma Center for three weeks following his many surgeries. On April 1, he was transferred to the step-down unit on the fifth floor. While there, staff from Carolinas Rehabilitation followed William to monitor his progress and prepare him for rehab. The trauma team and Carolinas Rehabilitation worked closely together throughout the course of his acute care stay.

On April 4, the family who never lost faith and believed that their son would one day awake from the coma received their miracle. “I was putting ChapStick® on William’s lips, and all of a sudden he was completing my sentences,” April recalls.

William was still using a feeding tube and wearing a trach collar,



It’s amazing how much [William] improved at Carolinas Rehabilitation.

—April Walker



< William Walker enjoys some time outdoors with his mother, April (left), and displays his good humor and positive outlook at home (above) after recovering from a TBI at Carolinas Rehabilitation.

though. “We obviously couldn’t take William home in his current state, and we knew that he needed aggressive therapy in order to make functional and cognitive gains,” says April.

THE ROAD TO RECOVERY

William’s sister, Rachel, is a neuropsychologist in Richmond who works indirectly with the nation’s TBI Model Program. She encouraged her parents to send William to Carolinas Rehabilitation, one of the nation’s 16 leading TBI Model Programs.

David and April saw the difference immediately after William was admitted. “Before he started rehabilitation, William needed two therapists to help him stand,” April says. “After the first full day of rehabilitation, William could bathe himself.

“I was amazed at the expertise at Carolinas Rehabilitation,” April continues. “The therapists had a rare ability to know when to push William and when to back off. It’s amazing how much he improved at Carolinas Rehabilitation.”

A HAPPY HOMECOMING

William returned to his home in Denver, NC, under his family’s care. Today, he can walk without assistance. When asked a question, William answers in a playful tone. April reports that he never lost his sense of humor and is still a tease.

“It is amazing to think that just four months ago he was unresponsive,” April says. When asked what advice he would give to other people who experience similar injuries, “I would tell them to get tough,” William says, with a giggle and a big, bright smile. ■

THE WILL TO SUCCEED

A former Carolinas Rehabilitation patient returns to help others heal

When Carolinas Medical Center’s medical residents graduated this past June, Jesse Lieberman, MD, was front and center. “I felt overwhelmed and really happy,” he says. “It was like closing another chapter in my life—it gave me time for reflection.”

Dr. Lieberman never doubted he’d graduate, but that achievement took more willpower than it did most of his peers. That’s because Dr. Lieberman has been a tetraplegic since 2003.



▲ Jesse Lieberman, MD

A DETERMINED SPIRIT

Five years earlier, Lieberman—at the time a newly engaged, third-year medical student at Wake Forest University—fell three stories from an apartment balcony while helping a neighbor who was locked out of his home. The accident left him a C5 tetraplegic and a patient at Carolinas Rehabilitation.

Despite the doubts from his physician, Lieberman graduated from medical school—the first C5 tetraplegic to do so—on time in 2004. After interning at the Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University, Lieberman settled into Charlotte three years ago to begin his residency at CMC.

MORE ACHIEVEMENTS AHEAD

Dr. Lieberman’s future is exciting. This August, he began a yearlong spinal cord injury fellowship at the University of Pittsburgh. He chose to do this fellowship to maximize his own injury and use it in a positive way. After his fellowship ends, he’ll return to work for Carolinas Rehabilitation. Joining Dr. Lieberman are his wife, Michelle, their newborn twins and their four dogs. ■

⇒ LEARN MORE!

To read more about Dr. Lieberman and his experience as a patient and a physician at Carolinas Rehabilitation, visit www.carolinasrehabilitation.org.

The Invisible Wounds of War

Carolinas Rehabilitation and Citizen Soldier offer new workshop

Carolinas Rehabilitation is recognized state- and nationwide as a leader in brain injury rehabilitation, treatment, research and education. Recently, Project STAR was asked to develop (in collaboration with the Citizen Soldier Support Program) a curriculum to educate direct-care service providers and family physicians about mild traumatic brain injury (TBI) in military personnel returning from service in Iraq and Afghanistan.

This workshop, “Traumatic Brain Injury: The Invisible Wounds of War,” will be held in nine locations across North Carolina. It will serve as a model for future training across the

United States through the Citizen Soldier Support Program.

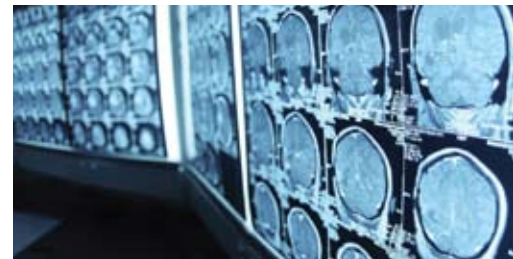
“TBI is a common consequence of any war ... yet, accessing the right treatment, right now, remains a challenge for many wounded service members and veterans,” says Susan H. Connors, CEO of the Brain Injury Association of America. This makes it

vital to educate service providers and physicians in the community about identifying potential brain injury symptoms and where to assist the patient.

Carolinas Rehabilitation is honored and proud to offer expertise in brain injury education to assist our service members. ■

⇒ ADVANCED CARE

To learn more about this and other unique initiatives at Carolinas Rehabilitation, visit www.carolinasrehabilitation.org.



ON THE SCENE

Professional athletes benefit from outpatient services

Carolinas Rehabilitation’s outpatient sites provide athletic training and physical therapy services for area teams, companies and other groups throughout the area. Two local companies that take advantage of the outpatient program are Hendrick Motorsports and the North Carolina Dance Theatre.

• **HENDRICK MOTORSPORTS**, located in Concord, is a leader in the NASCAR series. Carolinas Rehabilitation provides athletic training and physical therapy services to Hendrick Motorsports’ drivers, pit crew and staff. Clinicians are on-site three times a week to provide injury assessment and treatment; they also provide on-call services to anyone who becomes injured during the weekend. “Most of the injuries we see are overuse injuries, particularly with the pit crew, and acute athletic injuries,” says Greg Ott, clinic manager and physical therapist.

• **THE NORTH CAROLINA DANCE THEATRE (NCDT)** has an established national reputation for artistic excellence and is widely regarded as one of Charlotte’s premiere arts organizations. Carolinas Rehabilitation provides on-site treatment to the NCDT twice a week and has developed a Performing Arts Program to provide quality and efficient medical care to performers. The program’s goal is to educate performing artists about musculoskeletal biomechanics to reduce injury risks and rehabilitate injured artists quickly. ■

OTHER RESEARCH PROJECTS

Carolinas Rehabilitation is also home to the following studies:

- SCI Rehab Outcome Project—funded by the NIDRR
- TBI Practice-Based Evidence—funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and NIDRR
- TBI Model Systems—funded by the NIDRR
- Voting Participation After TBI—funded by the NIH
- Treatment Intervention for Facial Affect Recognition Problems—funded by the NIDRR
- Spinal Cord Independence Measure—funded by the Craig H. Nielsen Foundation



New hope for TBI patients

Carolinas Rehabilitation is one of the largest and busiest rehabilitation hospitals in the Southeast. In addition to providing excellent care, our physicians, therapists and nursing staff are committed to educating clinicians through an integrated research program. Many of our patients are enrolled in clinical research studies as part of their program.

AMANTADINE AND POST-TBI IRRITABILITY AND AGGRESSION STUDY

Carolinas Rehabilitation will lead a national study to see if a drug used to bring patients who have a traumatic brain injury (TBI) out of a coma could also be used to treat the irritability and aggression often associated with brain injuries. The study will be funded by a \$4.9 million grant from the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR).

Carolinas Rehabilitation physicians were the first to discover that the drug, amantadine, might have a new use. (Amantadine is used to treat Parkinson’s disease and prevent viral infections.)

Flora Hammond, MD, brain injury program director and research director at Carolinas Rehabilitation, is the project director for the grant study. Dr. Hammond recently completed a 76-person pilot study at the facility that found amantadine reduced irritability and aggression in patients suffering from brain injuries. The grant will be used to repeat the study at multiple rehabilitation centers nationwide to confirm the findings.

“Irritability and aggression are problems that greatly affect the lives of many traumatic brain injury individuals and their caregivers,” says Dr. Hammond. “A need for assistance in these two areas has been expressed, and with this study we hope to verify our findings and help individuals and caregivers cope with the effects of the injury.”

Patients ages 16 to 65 who have a TBI over a six-month duration are eligible for the study. Half will receive amantadine, and half will receive a placebo. ■



➔ **LEADING THE WAY**

For more information about the Amantadine and Post-TBI Irritability and Aggression Study, call Marybeth Whitney at **704-355-1409** or visit **www.carolinasrehabilitation.org**.

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Carolinas Rehabilitation



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DID YOU KNOW?

- Carolinas Rehabilitation is one of only 16 sites in the United States to be awarded the Traumatic Brain Injury Model System grant; it has been a model system since 1998.
- Our level of care, combined with state-of-the-art equipment and an expert staff, has led our patients and their families to rate Carolinas Rehabilitation's overall quality at 95 percent or better since 2003.
- Carolinas Rehabilitation houses the largest psychiatry practice in the Southeast.
- Our main inpatient facility in Charlotte is one of the largest not-for-profit freestanding rehabilitation facilities of its kind in the United States.
- Carolinas Rehabilitation has been awarded a three-year accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) on all 16 of its programs—the most of any other rehabilitation hospital in the region.
- Licensed for 182 beds, Carolinas Rehabilitation is one of the largest inpatient rehabilitation providers in the nation.
- The brain-injury unit has been awarded the 5-Star Award for Overall Quality of Care by Professional Research Consultants (PRC).

HOW TO REACH US

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Cycle to the Sea

Imagine riding a bike 180 miles from Charlotte to Myrtle Beach in three days. Now imagine doing it using only your arms or without sight. That's exactly what a group of extraordinary cyclists do each spring.

Nineteen athletes participated in the ninth annual Cycle to the Sea in April to raise more than \$17,000 for the Adaptive Sports and Adventures Program (ASAP), sponsored by Carolinas Rehabilitation. The event features athletes with physical disabilities who cycle on handcycles and/or tandem bikes. This year, entrants ranged in age from 9 to 65 and older and included Bill Scelza, MD, a member of the Carolinas Rehabilitation staff who's also a paraplegic.

Cycle to the Sea is one of the most popular fundraisers for the ASAP and allows the program to continue to offer a variety of low-cost programs, including power wheelchair soccer, quad rugby and adaptive water skiing for youth and adults with physical challenges. ■



⇒ SAVE THE DATE!

Next year's Cycle to the Sea will be held April 23–25. For more information, call **1-877-REHAB51**.

