A family member, friend or I have had a *spinal injury*

What now?

01 What is a spinal injury?

A spinal cord injury is caused by damage to any part of the spinal cord or nerves at the end of the spinal canal – causing changes in strength, sensation and other body functions below the site of the injury.

02 Is this a new injury?

No

Would you like to find out more about:

- Recurring bladder infections
- Infected wounds / bedsores
- Sexual dysfunction
- Emotional problems / feeling depressed
- Recurrent muscle spasms
- Autonomic dysreflexia
- Establishing a bowel routine

View the spinal cord injury annual review program brochure and the patient educational material – available on this site.

Yes

03 How does Life Rehabilitation fit into this?

A spinal cord injury has lifelong consequences which will require care, rehabilitation and hard work.

Rehabilitation requires teamwork between the rehabilitation professionals and the family. Remember that each spinal injury is different and therefore the recovery is different too. Your recovery will depend on many factors such as the severity and location of the spinal injury, other concurrent injuries you might have sustained, your age and your response to the rehabilitation programme.

The team of professionals attending to you will include a combination of the following: a doctor, dietician, occupational therapist, physiotherapist, psychologist, social worker, rehabilitation nurses and a speech-language therapist.

04 What is acute rehabilitation?

According to the World Health Organization, rehabilitation is “a process aimed at enabling people with disabilities to reach and maintain their optimal physical, sensory, intellectual, psychological and social functional levels. Rehabilitation provides tools for people with disabilities, to attain independence and self determination.” In short we will do our very best to work with you to recover and become physically, emotionally and mentally stronger.

05 Where do we go from here?

If you have medical aid:

- Get a referral letter from your doctor (and supporting documentation – reports or therapy letters).
- Contact the unit of your choice (see map of facilities).
- A rehabilitation admission consultant will contact you and an assessment will be arranged free of charge (telephonically / in-person).
- A motivation for rehabilitation will be sent to your medical aid.
- If approved, your admission will be scheduled – please refer to the patient information brochure for more information on what you can expect once you are admitted.

If you are paying privately:

- Get a referral letter from your doctor (and supporting documentation – reports or therapy letters).
- Contact the unit of your choice (see map of facilities).
- A rehabilitation admission consultant will contact you and an assessment will be arranged free of charge (telephonically / in-person).
- Quotation for private admission will be issued.
- Once payment is received, your admission will be scheduled – please refer to the patient information brochure for more information on what you can expect once you are admitted.

06 What happens after I am admitted?

1. Assessment by all members of the interdisciplinary team
2. A specific rehabilitation plan will be designed for each patient
3. Family meeting
4. Therapy as needed – individual and group intervention (each patient is different)
5. Patient and family education
6. Practicing skills learnt in therapy in the ward environment supervised by nursing staff
7. Discharge planning
   a. Carer identification and training
   b. Assistive devices motivation
   c. Home accessibility recommendation
   d. Weekend leave of absence
8. Out-patient follow up
   a. Referral or option to continue as out- patient at facility (if possible)

07 What happens after rehabilitation?

Patient success stories

Out patient care

Management of spasticity

Links to resourceful sites

Life HEALTH CARE

Making life better