

Questions to Ask When Choosing a Spinal Cord Injury Rehabilitation Program



When choosing a rehabilitation program, you should feel confident about the quality of care you or your loved one will receive. We recommend that you compare options based on key criteria so that you can make an informed decision. Admissions staff can help answer these questions.

	Shepherd Center (A)	Hospital B	Hospital C
1. Clinical Capabilities – Look for a specialized comprehensive program that is experienced caring for your type of injury for your age group.			
A. Does the hospital specialize in spinal cord injury, or is it one of many services they offer?	Specialized	_____	_____
B. How many patients are admitted to the Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) Rehabilitation Program each year?	>250	_____	_____
C. How many years of experience with spinal cord injury patients does the hospital have?	Since 1975	_____	_____
D. What is the average age of patients in the Spinal Cord Injury Rehabilitation Program?	42	_____	_____
E. Is the facility equipped to manage life-threatening emergencies on-site?	Yes, we have a 10-bed ICU onsite	_____	_____
F. Are patients able to begin rehabilitation if they have significant medical challenges?	Yes	_____	_____
G. What is the patient to nurse ratio?	RNs & PCTs 4:1 days, 6:1 nights	_____	_____
H. What stages of the continuum of care does the facility provide? Check all that apply:			
<input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C		<input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Intensive Care (ICU)		<input type="checkbox"/> Outpatient Services	
<input type="checkbox"/> Inpatient Rehabilitation		<input type="checkbox"/> Transition Support Program	
<input type="checkbox"/> Post-Acute Rehabilitation (Day Program)		<input type="checkbox"/> Ongoing Health and Wellness Activities	
I. Does your program offer inpatient treatment for patients with a disorder of consciousness, including those in a coma, unresponsive wakefulness or minimally conscious state?	Yes	_____	_____
2. Counseling Capabilities – Look for a program with a variety of integrated supportive care services for patients and families going through a significant life event. Check all that apply.			
<input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C		<input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Peer Support		<input type="checkbox"/> Family Counseling	
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual and Group Therapy		<input type="checkbox"/> Vocational Counseling	
<input type="checkbox"/> Psychotherapy		<input type="checkbox"/> Substance Misuse Counseling	



3. Quality Outcomes – Look for a program with engaged staff that has a track record of success in returning patients to healthy lives with purpose, and as much independence as possible.

A. What percent of all Shepherd Center patients return to home or community rather than long-term care facilities?

92.2%

B. What is the percentage of patients who get readmitted to a hospital within 30 days after discharge?

4.6%

C. How often and for how long each day do patients get treatment by specialists such as physical, occupational and speech therapists, if they are medically able?

3-4 hours every weekday

D. What is the employee engagement rate? This is a measure of how many employees will go the extra mile rather than doing the minimum. National average for healthcare is 41%.

95%

E. Does the hospital have a clinical research program focused on improving treatments and outcomes?

Yes, over 75 active studies

4. Family Experience – Look for a program that meets the needs of both patients and their families.

A. Are there low-cost or funded living arrangements for family members? What is the cost?

Yes, at no charge

What style housing is it? How far from the hospital?

Private apartments on campus

How long can you stay? How do you qualify?

Up to 30 days if both the patient and family live more than 60 miles from the hospital

B. Are activities planned for patients on weekends and evenings?

Yes

C. Is there family counseling available?

Yes

D. Is there training for family members on how to be future caregivers?

Yes, considered essential

E. Is there support for after discharge?

Yes, Transition Support Program (shepherd.org/TSP)

5. Added Value Services – Look for services that go beyond the minimum covered by most insurance plans. Check all that apply.

A B C

Recreation Therapy

Vocational Therapy

Assistive Technology Consultations

A B C

Adaptive Driving Instruction

Peer Support

Facility Animals Assisting with Independence and Emotional Support



6. Learning More – Ensure all of your questions get answered and look for the ability to take a tour or talk to people who have been through the program.

Phone Number	800-743-7437		
Email Address	admissions@shepherd.org		
Website	shepherd.org		

Shepherd Center, located in Atlanta, Georgia, is a private, not-for-profit hospital specializing in medical treatment, research and rehabilitation for people with spinal cord injury, brain injury, multiple sclerosis, spine and chronic pain, and other neurological conditions.

Founded in 1975, Shepherd Center is ranked by *U.S. News & World Report* among the top 10 rehabilitation hospitals in the nation. In its more than four decades, Shepherd Center has grown from a six-bed rehabilitation unit to a world-renowned, 152-bed hospital that treats more than 850 inpatients, nearly 450 day program patients, and more than 7,500 outpatients each year.

To learn more about admission to Shepherd Center, visit ***shepherd.org/admissions*** or call ***1-800-SHEPHERD (800-743-7437)***.