

Standardization of Nursing and Allied Health Care for Patients with Spinal Cord Injury in Alberta Hospitals

Background

- A spinal cord injury (SCI) is a **life altering** event, resulting in complex care needs and patients often requiring hospitalization (acute and rehabilitation) for an extended period of time.
- **Patients** living with an SCI and their families report that there is a lack of, or inconsistent, care, teaching and supports across hospital sites.
- **Staff** report that care is different across the sites, and often dependent upon the unit or program that the patient is admitted to.

Project Plan & Goals

- The Neurosciences, Rehabilitation & Vision Strategic Clinical Network™ (NRV SCN) is **supporting Nursing and Allied Health** (ex. Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy etc.) professionals, in collaboration with **persons with lived experience**, to standardize the care of patients with SCI in hospital.
- Subject matter experts have prioritized **9 topics for standardization: Autonomic Dysreflexia, Neurogenic Bladder Management, Neurogenic Bowel Management, Skin Integrity & Pressure Injury Prevention, Respiratory Care, Pain & Spasticity Management, Psychological Care & Peer Support, Transitions in Care, and Spinal Signs Assessment.**
- This work is being informed by a research grant to study the patient and family experience in acute care and inpatient rehabilitation, as well as by a scoping review of best practice guidelines for nursing care in SCI.
- Nursing and Allied Health care being aligned with medical management.
- The goals of this initiative is to: decrease practice variation, improve the patient and family experience, improve transitions in care, and improve safety for patients.



Creating a standardized pathway of care that is evidenced-based, as well as patient and family focused, will likely increase patient satisfaction and patient outcomes.



