

# UNDERSTANDING PM&R

THE ROLE OF PM&R IN  
PROVIDING QUALITY HEALTHCARE



**Understanding the  
Role of PM&R:  
*Providing Quality Healthcare***

## What is PM&R?

- ▶ Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation
- ▶ Established medical specialty
- ▶ Restore or maximize function
- ▶ “Quality of Life” specialty



# What Conditions Do PM&R Physicians Treat?

- ▶ Acute and chronic medical conditions
- ▶ Musculoskeletal conditions
- ▶ Severe disabilities

# Conditions

- ▶ Low back pain
- ▶ Sports-related injury
- ▶ Birth defect
- ▶ Trauma recovery
- ▶ Spinal cord injury
- ▶ Multiple sclerosis



# Conditions

- ▶ Brain injury
- ▶ Stroke
- ▶ Amputation
- ▶ Cancer
- ▶ Nerve injury



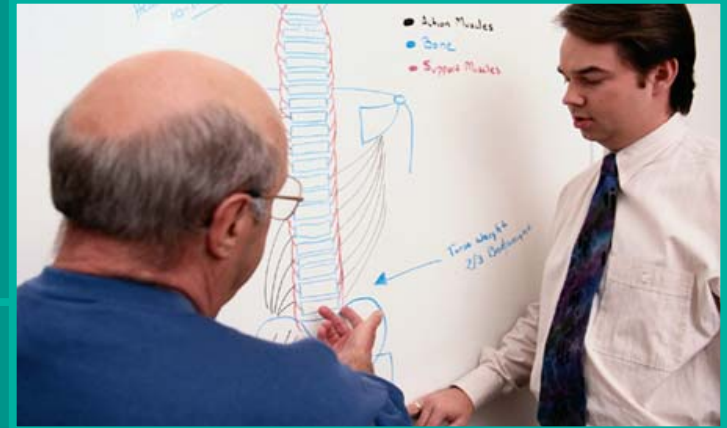
# Conditions

- ▶ Neck pain
- ▶ Arthritis
- ▶ Tendinitis
- ▶ Work-related injury
- ▶ Repetitive stress injury
- ▶ Muscular dystrophy



# Education & Training

- ▶ Must understand all major body systems and their impact on function
- ▶ Four years of college
- ▶ Four years of medical school
- ▶ Four years of residency training
- ▶ Subspecialty training





# Advanced Diagnosis and Treatment



- ▶ Special diagnostic techniques:  
EMG, nerve conduction studies
- ▶ Sample treatment options:
  - ▶ therapeutic exercise
  - ▶ heat and cold therapy
  - ▶ manual medicine
  - ▶ biofeedback
  - ▶ physical therapy
  - ▶ prescription medication
  - ▶ injection techniques

# The PM&R Approach

- ▶ Comprehensive care
- ▶ Individualized approach
- ▶ Preventive medicine
- ▶ Nonsurgical treatment
- ▶ Teamwork
- ▶ Goal-directed care



# Ensuring High-Quality Care

- ▶ Case management
- ▶ Nonsurgical approach
- ▶ Treatment team leader
- ▶ Measurable goals



## Low Back Pain: A case study

- ▶ Steve F.; 35-year-old factory worker; out of work for 10 months
- ▶ Symptoms: constant pain, out of shape, depressed, overweight
- ▶ Previous treatment:
  - ▶ physical therapy, hot packs, therapeutic massage, OTC pain medication



## Low Back Pain - Statistics

- ▶ 4 out of 5 Americans will experience low back pain
- ▶ Most frequent cause of disability for people under 45
- ▶ Estimated annual cost to society \$20 -\$50 billion
- ▶ Second most common reason for primary care visit

# Low Back Pain: PM&R approach

- ▶ Comprehensive clinical exam and medical history
- ▶ Assessment of patient lifestyle, occupational risks
- ▶ Potential for future complications
- ▶ Goal setting



# Low Back Pain: Treatment plan

- ▶ Pain and sleep medication
- ▶ Physical therapy program
- ▶ Patient counseling and education
- ▶ Measure progress



## Low Back Pain: Results

- ▶ Pain relief
- ▶ Return to work in 33 days
- ▶ Patient practicing self-management, prevention techniques





# PM&R Success in Treating Low Back Pain

- ▶ Back Pain Survey in *New York* magazine
- ▶ Patients report greater relief from low back pain when treated by PM&R physicians

# Stroke Rehabilitation: A case study

- ▶ Alice M.; 78-year-old woman with diabetes
- ▶ Left side weakness and numbness
- ▶ Discharged to home
- ▶ Given medication to prevent recurrence of stroke
- ▶ One week later, she falls; readmitted for knee injury



# Stroke - Statistics



- ▶ Leading cause of disability among the elderly
- ▶ 3 million Americans have stroke-related disability
- ▶ Estimated \$30 billion cost to society each year
- ▶ Recovery typically involves multiple care settings

# Stroke Rehab: PM&R approach

- ▶ Treatment team leader
- ▶ Patient assessment
- ▶ Focus on continuity of care
- ▶ Patient and family involvement

## Stroke Rehab: PM&R assessment

- ▶ Alice's home somewhat isolated; frequent stair-climbing required
- ▶ Diabetes contributes to numbness in her feet and legs
- ▶ Weakness from stroke, fear of falling limits her activity
- ▶ Signs of depression

## Stroke Rehab: PM&R goals

- ▶ Maximum mobility
- ▶ Help Alice regain functional independence, confidence
- ▶ Prevent more falls
- ▶ Manage depression

# Stroke Rehab: Treatment plan

- ▶ Safety improvements to living environment
- ▶ Short, intensive outpatient program with emphasis on stair climbing
- ▶ Daily home exercises to improve circulation



# Stroke Rehab: Results

- ▶ Alice's mood and confidence restored
- ▶ Two years later, continues to live independently with no more falls
- ▶ Maintains independent personal care skills





# What Can PM&R Physicians Do For You?

- ▶ Case management skills
- ▶ Patient-focused care
- ▶ Team orientation
- ▶ Nonsurgical treatment
- ▶ Measurable goals



# How to Locate a PM&R Physician

- ▶ Primary care doctor
- ▶ Telephone directories
- ▶ Local medical society
- ▶ [www.aapmr.org](http://www.aapmr.org)
- ▶ 312/464-9700



# PM&R Physicians – Adding Quality to Life

- ▶ Match resources to patient needs
- ▶ Maximize patient function, self-sufficiency
- ▶ Balance quality and cost of care
- ▶ Team players—work well with primary care doctors



***“Quality of life has long been the goal of PM&R. We strive to achieve that goal by looking at the multiple problems of patients, minimizing those problems, and optimizing function.”***

