

**INSIDE THIS ISSUE!****Meriter Rehab Focuses on Efficiency & Safety in 2005****PMR and Wellness Outreach****Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation Services****Meriter's mission is:**

to heal this day  
to teach for tomorrow  
to embrace excellence always  
to serve our communities—  
for a lifetime of quality health care.

**Meriter Expands Orthopedic & Spine Care**

As Meriter ends its two year contractual relationship with Human Motion Institute, a consulting group to expand orthopedic and spine care at Meriter Hospital, we would like to look back on many of our accomplishments. Work teams were formulated to enhance the patient care experience for individuals seeking treatment for musculoskeletal issues. Clinical teams were established for the following areas: Joint Replacement and Reconstruction, Sports Medicine Services, Surgical Spine Care and Rehabilitation Services. Each team's focus was to look at the total patient experience from the decision to have surgery through hospitalization and the entire care continuum.

For example, a patient scheduled for joint replacement surgery is encouraged to attend one of Meriter's educational classes for hip or knee replacement. Information about the surgery is shared through Meriter Hospital's Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Nursing and Patient & Family Services staff. An educational booklet is supplied as a reference guide.

A clinical management guideline (a standard of care) is utilized once the patient is on the medical unit following surgery. Physical Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Nursing and other hospital staff under the direction of a surgeon work with the patient to help them reach an optimal level of functioning prior to their discharge. Some patients benefit from an inpatient rehabilitation experience. Other patients

can be discharged to home with home health care or follow-up provided at one of Meriter's outpatient therapy sites. Below are a few examples of each team's accomplishments:

**Joint Team**

- Reviewed functioning scores, patient satisfaction and clinical quality data to ensure the best care outcomes for patients treated at Meriter through all levels of care.
- This information is used to develop improvements to the patient care experience.

**Rehabilitation Team**

- Implemented a specific outcome system that compares outpatient rehabilitation therapists to the Human Motion Institute top 25% best performers.
- Worked with the Sports Medicine Team to develop quick access for Physical or Occupational Therapy services for patients who have been treated at Meriter's Emergency Room.

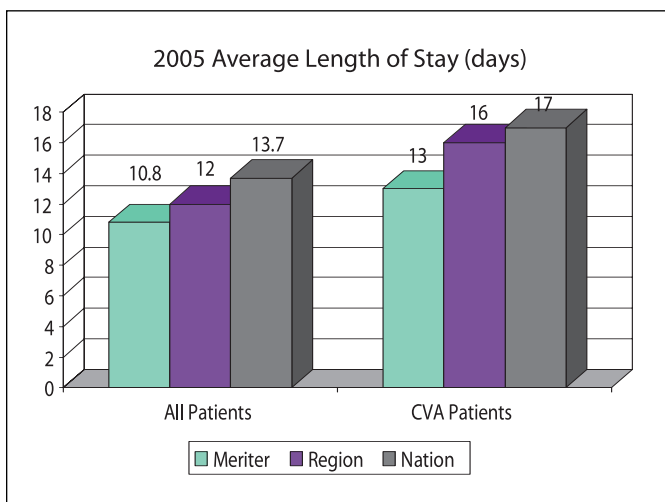
**Sports Medicine Team**

- Developed a "Lean on Me" lecture series that is specific for orthopedic and spine care. Both physician specialists and rehabilitation therapists provide lectures for the community. Over 800 individuals have signed up for the lecture series over the past two years.
- Planned and implemented various community events such as running and soccer clinics.
- Developed golf and throwing analysis self pay services.

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## Meriter Rehab Focuses on Efficiency & Safety in 2005

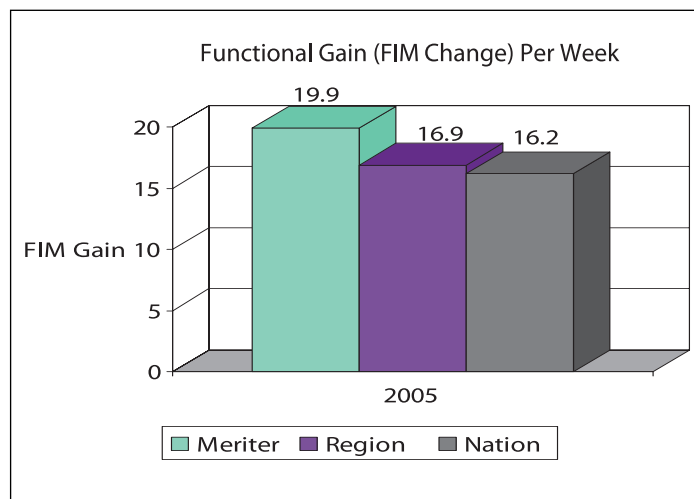
Meriter’s Inpatient Rehabilitation Unit again demonstrated excellent outcomes in 2005 while focusing on efficiency and safety. In 2005, Meriter’s program worked with 325 patients to improve their function following strokes, brain and spinal cord injuries and other debilitating conditions. Our program has continued to score well above regional and national averages in measures of efficiency. Our program utilizes the Uniform Data System (UDS) outcome measurement system, which allows us to benchmark outcomes with 882 inpatient rehab units across the country. Meriter’s length of stay continues to run well below regional and national averages.



The diagnostic mix of patients treated in rehabilitation at Meriter has changed somewhat over the years. The largest group of patients treated is those with neurological conditions such as stroke (26%), spinal cord injury (10%) and various types of brain injury/dysfunction (11%). However, Meriter has also

treated a growing number of orthopedic patients (22%) such as those with disability following replacement of hip or knee joints.

Efficiency is measured by the rate of improvement in function (measured on the “FIM” scale) divided by the length of stay on rehab. Meriter has improved efficiency through close coordination of the rehabilitation process among team members, patients, families and other health care providers.



Rehabilitation has also focused on improving the safety of both patients as well as staff. In 2005, there were a total of only three incidents, such as falls, that lead to any patient injury. However, the goal is to eliminate these incidents using preventive measures, safe environments, rapid responses to patient needs, etc. In 2006, the program will strive to increase the awareness and appropriate utilization of inpatient rehab services and will continue to improve efficiency and safety.

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### Meriter Expands... *Continued from page 1*

#### Surgical Spine Team

- Developed a pre-operative patient educational class for those having a spinal fusion, laminectomy or disc decompression procedure.
- Developed a Pre-Op Clinic service where patients who do not have a Meriter based primary care physician can have a physical exam and pre-surgical lab work completed.

Other initiatives are currently in the planning stages to enhance our musculoskeletal services here at Meriter. We look forward to sharing them with you in the near future.

For more information on Meriter Hospital’s Orthopedic and Spine Care Programs, go to [www.meriter.com/ortho](http://www.meriter.com/ortho) or [www.meriter.com/spine](http://www.meriter.com/spine).

**EMPLOYEES  
OF THE MONTH**

**July**

Becky Hanan,  
Occupational Therapy

**September**

Alissa Gauger, Marketing

**PMR and Wellness Outreach**

‘To heal this day, to teach for tomorrow, to embrace excellence always, to serve our communities for a lifetime of quality healthcare.’ Meriter’s mission statement is a way of life in our Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation department. Part of this mission for Meriter’s Physical and Occupational Therapy departments is to serve people in our community through addressing wellness. We strive to support and encourage healthy lifestyles by helping people to engage in a variety of physical, recreational and sports activities safely and confidently. Beyond therapy, we are involved in a variety of community education programs through Meriter’s Community Health Education Center (CHEC) and other special programs.



This past spring, a number of Meriter therapists teamed up

with local physicians to present a “Lean on Me” series of free talks related to orthopedic and spine health. The Community Health Education Center coordinated these presentations, which typically had 30-50 participants per session. Surgical intervention, therapy approaches, self-treatment and injury prevention strategies were discussed.

Topics included management of shoulder pain, back and neck pain, hand and wrist arthritis, knee injuries, and foot and ankle problems. Aquatic therapy after joint replacement and yoga-based exercises for improving postural awareness were special topics. Participants indicated they learned practical strategies to help prevent and manage orthopedic injuries.



Runners enjoyed recent offerings from our Physical Therapy staff.

Leading up to the Meriter Nurses Run in April, we provided a series of training related classes, with the finale being participation in the Nurses Run.



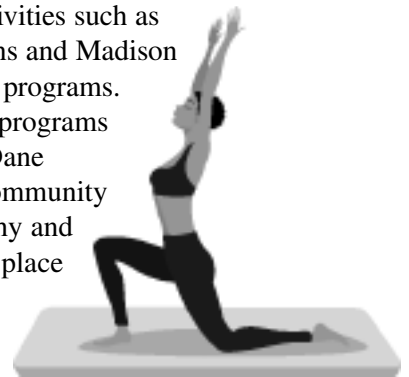
“Beginning Runners-On the Right Track” was offered in June with a lecture on training tips and injury prevention and an individual running video analysis session for each participant. A program for advanced runners is being offered this fall.



Other wellness offerings occur on a regular basis, such as “Stress Reduction Through Mindful Meditation and Movement.” We have done several sports clinics for child and adult recreational athletes, such as soccer players. Other staff help out with community based fitness activities such as charity runs and Madison “Fit City” programs.

These programs help the Dane County community be a healthy and enjoyable place to live.

Look for Meriter’s “Accent on Health” in your mail or under [www.meriter.com](http://www.meriter.com) in the Community Health Education Center section for future programs.



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## Patient Revisited — Roger Hovey

Three years ago, Roger Hovey had a cardiac arrest, with a rocky road to recovery. Neuropsychological testing showed changes in his ability to focus and perform higher level cognitive tasks, and as a result, he was unable to work. His “type A” personality kicked in and he developed anxiety that interfered with his daily living.

Roger needed an outlet for this anxiety. “I didn’t go to the Mild Brain Injury Support Group until about a year ago. After the first time, I felt so welcome and comfortable.” The facilitator, Ellen, sets two rules. “Members let others finish when they are speaking, and no one is pressured to speak. You feel you’ve spent an hour and a half with people who care and understand. If I say I have trouble making a decision about what to eat for lunch, they understand. They are helping me learn short cuts. Friends and family wonder why I have trouble with things. They are there for me, but it’s not the same. I can’t say enough about it (the Mild Brain Injury Group).” With the help of the group, Roger gained the confidence to volunteer at St. James School several times a week.

Roger has also developed a calming friendship with Sammy, his yellow lab. One day Roger saw an ad “free to a good home,” they met and a perfect match was made. Sammy loves long walks. “Sammy is my companion. We walk four to five times per day. Walking with Sammy clears my mind. When I need to cut my anxiety, I call Sammy.

He never turns me down, gets me away from the phone and I don’t watch much TV anymore. I know my route and we have people we visit along the way. Sammy is my buddy.”

