



Spinal Connection

Quality of life publication for Arkansans living well.

www.ascc.arkansas.gov

SPRING 2016 • VOLUME 27 • ISSUE 3

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2016 Annual Conference

Spina Bifida Camp

Summer is approaching fast and Spina Bifida Camp will soon be here. This year's camp is June 19th through June 24th, and the deadline to register has been extended to May 18th. With only 40 openings, acceptance is on a first-come, first-served basis so register early!

This week-long residential camp, located at Camp Aldersgate in Little Rock, is open to ASCC clients ages 6 to 16 with any type of spinal cord disability. There is no fee to attend. Camp activities include: campfires, canoeing, fishing, arts and crafts, and swimming. For those wanting more of a challenge at camp, there are activities like SCUBA diving, adapted archery, and an accessible adventure challenge rope course.

Applications and brochures were mailed out in March. If you have questions or would like an application, call Shalia Delph at 501-296-1788 or 800-459-1517 or email at shalia.delph@arkansas.gov.

TRIUMPH

TELE-Rehabilitation Interventions Through University Based Medicine for Prevention and Health

The TRIUMPH call center program holds the potential to offer patients and the healthcare system cost savings and time.

Jeff Pinto, Clinical Service Manager of TRIUMPH obtained his RN degree from Baptist Nursing School and just recently earned his BSN from UALR. He worked directly with spinal cord injury patients at Baptist Health Rehabilitation Institute. He enjoys working with this patient population, and was able to learn a tremendous amount of information about SCI care. Working in this area, he realized there is a real need for education in SCI management. Whether a patient was unsure what to do in their new condition or healthcare workers were unsure what to do for SCI patients, the need for education was there. He found out about the TRIUMPH telemedicine program at UAMS and knew this would be an opportunity to share information with not only the patient in the hospital but also families, caregivers and communities around the hospital. He is excited to be on the forefront of this new area of medicine.

The TRIUMPH call center was initiated in January of 2014 in order to provide access to timely and appropriate care for Arkansans with spinal cord injuries. In 2015, Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) information was incorporated into the program to provide access to those Arkansans who have had traumatic brain injuries. TRIUMPH is made possible by a grant from the Arkansas Trauma Rehabilitation Program and Arkansas Spinal Cord Commission, and uses the UAMS ANGELS call center in the Center for Distance Health at UAMS. The TRIUMPH program is also affiliated with Dr. Thomas Kiser and Dr. Rani Lindberg of the UAMS Department of Physical Medicine and Rehab.

Our mission for the TRIUMPH program is to target individuals with limitations in mobility, sensation, and other functional abilities by providing call center access for on-the-spot triage and consultation. To enhance quality of life and increase available resources among individuals, families, and rural providers. To stimulate healthcare system cost savings through efficient, around-the-clock, and evidence-based model of care delivery.

The TRIUMPH program serves as a 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, resource to serve patients with spinal cord injury and traumatic brain injury, as well as their families and providers in Arkansas. This is truly significant for those individuals who have suffered a spinal cord or traumatic brain injury and are at home in their communities; feeling that no one understands their injury or how to handle their needs. The TRIUMPH program allows for access to information or care in the time of need. TRIUMPH also provides healthcare professionals within the local community to have access to information and provide better care in the community. TRIUMPH keeps

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Spinal Connection

Spinal Connection is published quarterly by the Arkansas Spinal Cord Commission, 1501 N. University Ave., Suite 470, Little Rock, AR 72207

An Official Publication of



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Gone But Not Forgotten

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From the Director

Terra Patrom

Terra Patrom Appointed as ASCC Director



Sometimes it can be a toss up as to what the “From the Director” article will be. As I looked back in previous articles, I think one thing has never changed in the Director’s role... Leadership in the field of Spinal Cord Injury/Disability to enhance independent living in the State of Arkansas has always been a key passion. The change in trends continue from client populations to injury prevention to a resource today is gone tomorrow.

As we move forward I believe the key to continued success of ASCC is building on the roots and foundation of that passion. The passion to serve Arkansans with SCI/D cannot be enough, but it is a key point to decide on how or which way we create that movement. Movement can be defined as “an era that brought about change”. Yet, our movement has and never will cease. It is and should be seen as a continued movement that is driven by passion.

I have built on my roots and foundation of my passion since the summer of 1997 when I completed a Practicum at the ASCC Russellville Office with Robert Griffin. I met Cheryl Vines and Patti Rogers way back then. I knew then this was a movement in my life that was driven by a passion I understood and would continue to learn from each and every day.

I have had a few changes through the years. My black hair is now marked with some white hair. My children are both grown and out on their own. I have a grandson, Emmett, who now rules my life. And after 22 years of marriage, in July of 2014, I never thought in all my years of being driven with this passion, my own husband would become dependent on a wheelchair for mobility. Talk about driven by an old prevention motto that, “it can happen to anyone at any time”.

As you read this article, I hope you have and will join me in the continued movement that began many years ago under the ASCC leadership I first experienced almost 20 years ago. I will have my bumps and bruises along the way in this continued movement. I openly admit to those happening right now but I’m still that same driven individual many of you first met many years ago.

I am humbled and honored,
Terra Patrom, CRC

SCI/D Financial Scholarships for Education

Arkansas Spinal Cord Foundation announces 2016 scholarship opportunities to help pursue your education

Arkansas Spinal Cord Foundation (ASCF) announces the Sandra Turner Memorial Scholarships for 2016 with a **“CALL FOR APPLICATIONS.”** We encourage those wanting to further their education to apply. ASCF’s mission is to improve the quality of life for persons with spinal cord injuries and those who live with challenges associated with spinal cord diseases such as Spina Bifida, Multiple Sclerosis, ALS, and Spinal Spondylosis. A large part of fulfilling our mission is to help individuals, like you, to achieve their education goals.

We must receive your application by June 30, 2016. The foundation will award available scholarships in August, just in time to start the fall semester. We encourage any individual with a spinal cord disability, who is enrolled or planning to enroll in college or vocational/technical school, to take this opportunity to apply for assistance.

Eligibility Requirements:

- Must be an Arkansas resident.
- Must have a medically documented spinal cord disability and be a client of ASCC.
- Must have been accepted to a college, university or vocational/technical training program for the 2016 fall semester. This will include undergraduate or master’s level programs.
- Must complete and submit the ASCF Sandra Turner Memorial Scholarship application and all required documents by June 30, 2016.



Are you pursuing your education?

All applications will be reviewed by ASCF’s Scholarship Selection Committee and “each applicant will be notified by August 1, 2016, as to whether or not they have been awarded a scholarship,” states Mike Cranford, chairman of the selection committee.

For additional information or questions contact Mandy Carmack by calling (501)247-1977 or e-mail her at mandy@aslr.com.

Deadline for applications is June 30, 2016.

Summer and Heat

Summer and heat go together, at least in Arkansas.

This is a dangerous time for anyone with a spinal cord injury (SCI) because impairment of temperature regulation is a known problem in SCI. Even worse, you may not be aware of the problem until it is too late. This makes it essential that you take preventive measures to avoid becoming overheated and getting heat stroke.

Body temperature is maintained by a balance between heat production and heat loss. Sensation of hot and cold is located peripherally in the skin and centrally in the brain.

A person with a complete SCI and tetraplegia has impairment in temperature control and therefore a high risk of overheating: he or she does not sense the heat and cannot get rid of heat like an uninjured individual.

The most important mechanisms of heat loss are:

1. Behavioral changes (moving to a cooler environment, changing body position, changing amount of clothing).
2. Dilation of peripheral blood vessels.
3. Sweating.

Individuals with SCI have trouble with all three of these mechanisms because their skin



ASCC
Medical
Director



is unable to feel the sensation of heat; the body's circulatory system is not able to dilate the blood vessels of the skin; and sweating below the level of the SCI is severely impaired.

I tell my patients that it's as if they have lost half of their radiator.

Therefore, if you are in a hot environment you may be unable to sense the heat until your central core temperature has risen significantly. By the time you start feeling hot, it may be too late to cool off, so your first signs may be symptoms of heat stroke.

The symptoms of heat stroke are: headache, flushed face, nausea, tingling arms, increased respiration rate, "goose bumps" on the skin, chilliness, incoordination, dizziness, confusion, and loss of consciousness.

Complications range from breakdown of the muscle tissue, electrolyte disturbances, acute renal failure, and possibly death.

If you or somebody you know experiences this problem, medical attention should be sought promptly. Heat stroke is a medical emergency, so call 911. Until help arrives, attempt to cool the person off as much as possible. Place the person in an air-conditioned environment, remove excessive clothing, use

spray bottles of water to cool the skin, and massage the skin above the level of the SCI to stimulate peripheral dilation of blood vessels. If possible, place the person in a shower or cool bath of water to dissipate the heat and lower the body's core temperature.

The best treatment, however, is prevention.

To prevent you from having trouble with heat this summer, please follow these simple measures:

1. Stay in an air-conditioned environment if the temperature is above 90° F. Have an accessible air conditioned automobile or trailer nearby if you have to be outside and away from your home.
2. Avoid caffeinated and alcoholic beverages. Caffeine can cause dehydration and alcohol suppresses the central brain temperature sensor. Alcohol can exacerbate the problem by decreasing your awareness of the heat.
3. Wear light and removable clothing and stay in a shady area if possible.
4. Drink plenty of water and have a water spray bottle available if you have to be out in the heat.
5. Be aware of how uninjured individuals are responding to the heat. If they are sweating you are at risk of developing heat stroke unless you move to a cooler environment.

Enjoy the summer and remember to **stay cool!**

Continued from page 1 - **TRIUMPH**

patients close to home and prevents taking long drives to seek care, and potentially unnecessary and costly hospital admissions which can range up to \$47,000 in costs. TRIUMPH benefits by providing the patient and family with local access to better, efficient care, and most of all improved quality of life. The TRIUMPH program also allows follow-up over tele-medicine video. Local access to tele-medicine follow-up allows patients and family members to have shorter drives to go to a specialist for check-ups. Instead of traveling in a vehicle for 3 hours, which can be hazardous to some, they can travel less than an hour to a nearby facility. UAMS has eleven AHEC facilities all over the state of Arkansas. Areas include: Pine Bluff, Lake Village, Helena, West Memphis, Jonesboro, Springdale, Fayetteville, Fort Smith, Magnolia, and Texarkana. The TRIUMPH program also provides support to emergency departments throughout the state. Providers and healthcare workers in emergency departments in Arkansas can now consult with the only spinal cord injury certified physical medicine and rehabilitation doctor in Arkansas and brain injury specialist doctor through the TRIUMPH call center when patients with previous spinal cord injury or brain injury come into to their emergency department. Many of the emergency departments in Arkansas are equipped with tele-medicine audio/visual equipment which allow physicians to visualize the patients in the emergency departments if necessary. Now patients can be cared for at their local hospital ER and facilities instead of having to go additional miles for treatment. Allowing providers and healthcare workers to consult with spinal cord and brain injury specialists can also decrease unnecessary hospital admissions from occurring, cut healthcare costs, and provide great savings for patients and families.

The TRIUMPH program is also here to provide education, not only for patients, but to their family and healthcare providers as well. The website, UAMSpatientslearn.com, provides educational videos on spinal cord and brain injuries. Up-to-date guidelines for healthcare providers are being created every year to provide the most current information on management of spinal cord and brain injury patients. These can be found at the TRIUMPH website pmr.uams.edu/clinics-physicians/telemedicine/. Video presentations of these guidelines are available for viewing on the learnondemand.org website. Healthcare providers who watch these videos are able to receive 1 hour of continuing education credit. Inservices for management of spinal cord and brain injury are also provided for free by the TRIUMPH program.

The need is present all over the nation but especially in Arkansas. There is an estimated 12,000 new survivors of spinal cord injuries every year through out America. In Arkansas, around 200 people sustain a spinal cord injury every year. There are over 2,400 people living with a spinal cord injury in Arkansas and even more with brain injuries. Many spinal cord injury individuals live in rural communities outside of Pulaski County, according to the Arkansas Spinal Cord Commission. Life expectancies have increased for individuals living with a spinal cord injury but morbidity rates are higher for the first year of spinal cord injury.

TRIUMPH Call center provides assistance to providers around Arkansas, especially rural areas.

Individuals living with SCI, TBI, families and care professionals can always have access to physicians and health teams experienced with treating injuries. Calls are free, 24 hours a day 7 days a week at 1-855-767-6983.

Have a medical question?

Experiencing issues and need immediate answers?

**TRIUMPH
CALL CENTER**

**24/7
access**

1-855-767-6983

A Telemedicine Resource for Arkansans with Spinal Cord Injury, Brain Injury and Healthcare Providers

On-the-Spot Nurse Triage

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Interactive Video Assessments



Summertime Travel

You may not be aware of this but Amtrak offers two accessible train types for traveling across the country by train, the Superliner and the Viewliner. The closest routes to Arkansas for these two types of trains run out of New Orleans, LA and travel to either Chicago, IL or New York City, NY. So you would still have to drive to New Orleans or to another major city where these two types of trains operate from, which may or may not be an option for some. Both of these trains, however, have accessible rooms that can be purchased in coach, business, or first class and are intended for 2 adults. The rooms on the Viewliner also contain an accessible shower. As well as the usual amenities provided such as an electrical outlet, towels, and linens and blankets, an accessible room also includes meals brought to your room, attendant call buttons, climate control, and a daily newspaper and coffee. Loading onto the train for a wheelchair user is managed by using a lift system at the station. Amtrak allows both manual and power wheelchairs as long as they do not weigh over 600lbs occupied. Traveling by train may be a welcomed alternative if you are planning a long drive across the country. You may take an online virtual tour of the accessible rooms on an Amtrak train at Amtrak.com.

Not into trains, well how about a cruise ship? All cruise ships traveling in U.S. waters should be ADA compliant, however, some

cruise lines are better at meeting these guidelines than others. Look for cruise lines that have large ships in their fleet. These larger ships are quite roomy and allow a wheelchair user plenty of room for mobility. Accessible cabins have push button access and some have wide doorways, accessible showers, grab bars, and places to turn in your wheelchair. Many ships have lifts at their swimming pools making them accessible for a swim at sea, lowered playing tables in their casinos, and elevators within their theaters with accessible seating. Some ships have push button access to public restrooms and outside decks.

If you are planning a vacation this summer and your mode of transportation is the airplane, here are a few tips to make flying the friendly skies a stress free adventure.

When checking the airlines for reservations avoid making them online or using an automated system, instead speak directly with an agent so you can ask questions and explain what your needs are and get an understanding about what is available to you.

Ask for maximum assistance from the airline. Confirm this request each time you arrive at another terminal.

Inform the airline if you are utilizing a manual or electric wheelchair.

Have your wheelchair checked at the gate and obtain a receipt for your chair as you would your

luggage. This will allow you to take your chair onto the plane and then access your seat by transferring into an aisle chair. Remove your cushion, armrest, and footplates, and store them together in the overhead bin to ensure they do not get lost.

If you are utilizing an electric wheelchair, an important thing to remember is if your batteries are wet cell, they will be removed from your chair and secured in a leak proof container. Unfortunately, the airline can refuse to transport your electric chair because of the wet cell batteries.

Do NOT allow the airline to drive your wheelchair into the cargo hold, instead put your chair in neutral (push mode) and this will lower the chance for damage.

Protect your joystick by covering it with a small box, turning it in the downward position or by simply removing it entirely; if that is an option.

Rule of thumb; the airlines are in the business of getting people safely from one destination to the next and not your belongings; so take extra precautions to help ensure your wheelchair arrives in working order.

However you travel, whether it is by ship, plane, train, or automobile it is a good idea to plan your trip well in advance. There are many helpful websites online that can help with trip planning and in discovering the most accessible sites, hotels, and modes of transportation for your trip destination.



ASCC Congratulates

Garry "Chad" Wann on his promotion to the Arkansas Trauma Rehabilitation Program Manager position. Chad previously served under the ATRP program in the Health Educator position. His promotion became effective on February 8, 2016. Chad holds a Master's degree in Health Science. His employment background

working in the independent living arena and knowledge of resources will serve him well in this new position. As ASCC continues the work toward building the rehabilitation component of the Trauma System, key collaborative partnerships and resources will be essential to strategic changes for the betterment of rehabilitation in the State of Arkansas.



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- ② **SCI/D Sessions**
- ③ **Exhibition Hall**
National, state and local vendors display their latest – Meet with vendors, disability related organizations, hospitals, rehabilitation facilities, and gather resources from statewide agencies.
- ④ **Demonstrations**
See and learn about state-of-the-art adaptive mobility devices, new assistive technology, pressure mapping, and more.
- ⑤ **Door Prize Drawings!**

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We will release the exciting details soon!

