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GRATITUDE

A newsletter with inspiring updates on our community



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BURKE
Rehabilitation Hospital

MEMBER OF MONTEFIORE HEALTH SYSTEM

DEAR FRIENDS

I hope your year is off to a great start!

Last year challenged all of us—our medical teams and staff, as well as our patients, their families, and the community—in ways we had never seen before. I am so proud of the way Burke and our community came together to provide and offer care—and I know this year will offer even more to be hopeful about.

While we continue to treat survivors of COVID-19, we are also moving forward with a number of exciting capital projects meant to improve the overall patient experience, including the New Patient Entrance and the renovation and retrofitting of the Outpatient building on the main Burke campus. I am also pleased to announce that the new inpatient neurorehabilitation gym that so many of you generously supported, opened in December to the raves of therapists and patients alike.

We are also excited to announce that our newest outpatient location, on Taxter Road in Elmsford (*pictured on the next page*), opened recently with services that include physical, speech and occupational therapy, as well as additional programs, such as Driver Evaluation and concussion management. This opening brings us to 10 outpatient locations throughout Westchester and the Bronx and we are thrilled to be able to offer our services to even more people.

As always, I want to personally thank you for your continued support of Burke, especially during these unprecedented times. With your help, we have been able to continue to offer our life-changing programs—as well as provide new and innovative ones, such as a fitness program for people with a spinal cord injury, and other new programs that are designed to enhance the patient experience. As always, our focus is on our patients and what we can do to improve and innovate so they achieve their maximum recovery.

Please enjoy this edition of Gratitude as you learn more about some of the many programs we offer and ways we can partner together to support our patients. I am so grateful to you and wish you and your families continued happiness in the months ahead.

In good health,



Jeffrey Menkes
President & CEO



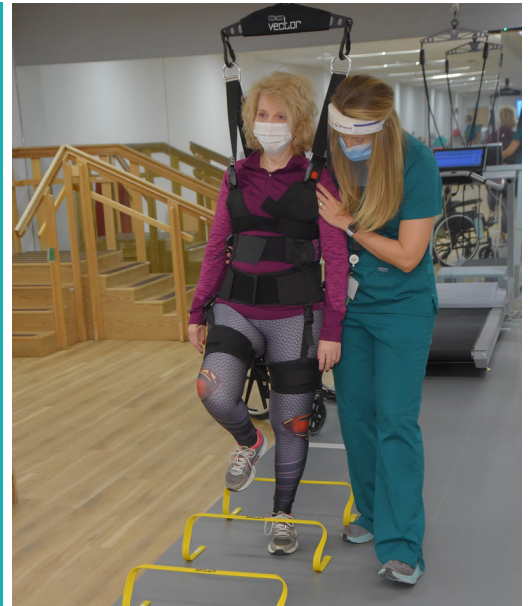
WHAT'S NEW AT BURKE

Things have been busy at Burke over the past few months. Here's a look at what's been going on:

New Inpatient Neurorehabilitation Gym Now Open

In December, the new inpatient neurorehabilitation gym opened to the delight of all. Susie (*pictured right*), a recent patient expressed such gratitude to be rehabbing in such a beautiful new space. "It builds confidence," Susie said as she walked the length of the gym in the Vector harness, "regardless of how I'm doing, I feel safe because the harness is on."

She is eternally grateful to the donors who so generously supported this project as she knows she's able to do this "because someone donated the money for this to happen. It's incredible! How do I ever begin to say thank you?"



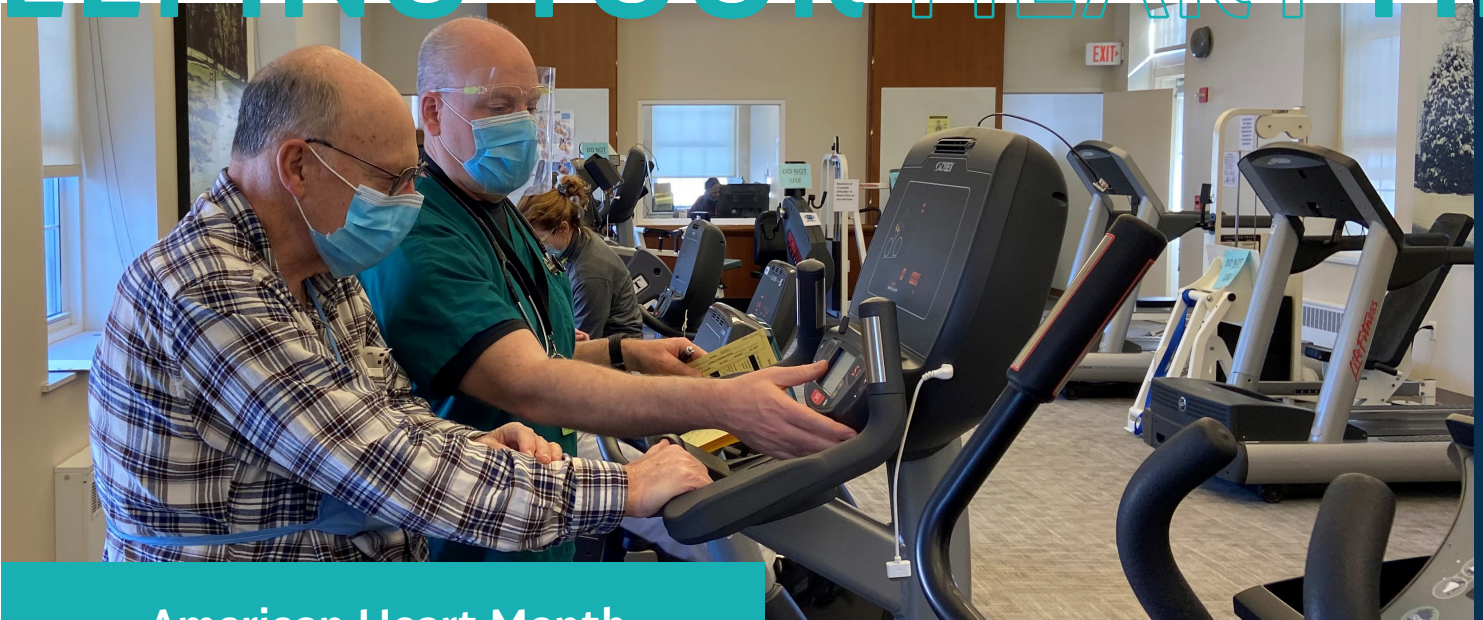
Moving Ahead with Capital Improvements

Burke continues to improve and update our century-old campus, allowing us to retain the elegance of the buildings and beauty of the campus while also creating spaces that cater to 21st century care. Along with creating more negative pressure rooms—which are critical to our continued treatment of Covid-19—and building a larger oxygen farm to allow for more direct oxygen flow into patient rooms, one of our biggest projects centers around creating a new, welcoming, and spacious patient entrance. In addition, the outpatient building is being renovated and retrofitted to allow for more of our most complex patients to be treated while maintaining social distance, room for the most cutting edge equipment, and reduced wait list time. These projects are estimated to be completed this summer.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS, THE BURKE AWARD, OR ANY OTHER BURKE INITIATIVES, PLEASE CALL THE DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT AT (914) 597-2847.

Save the Date: Burke Award 2021

While the Burke Award dinner—Burke's largest fundraiser of the year—was cancelled last year, we invite you to save the date for this year's celebration, which will be held on September 23, 2021 at Brae Burn Country Club in Purchase. More details, including this year's honorees, will be shared in the coming months.



American Heart Month

February marks American Heart Month—and while it’s always important to talk about heart health, it’s especially critical to be mindful of it these days.

“For the first time in 80 years, Covid-19 has replaced heart disease as the number one killer of Americans,” explains Robert Steigerwald, MS, RCEP, CPHQ, EIM3, Program Manager for Outpatient Cardiac Rehabilitation and a clinical exercise physiologist. But: “In the near future, Covid-19 will be under control and heart disease will regain its number one spot.”

That’s why Burke continues to offer programs that provide a vital continuum of care for patients, which extends from inpatient rehab through outpatient cardiac rehab and beyond.

“We offer comprehensive rehab services for patients with a variety of cardiopulmonary conditions,” says Danielle Struble-Fitzsimmons, DPT, PhD, Director, Cardiopulmonary Program. “Our team includes occupational, physical, speech, and recreational therapists who work as an interdisciplinary team to meet the unique needs of each patient.”

Over the past year, the team has adapted to changing protocols when necessary by offering therapy at the bedside, often finding innovative ways to meet patients’ needs despite the change of venue. Therapists also help with discharge planning for patients, as well as their families, who all play an active role in recovery.

“We provide a scientifically based program that achieves results. We watch the patient become stronger and more confident in front of us as we educate them on health, wellness and disease prevention and management.”

- Robert Steigerwald, MS, RCEP, CPHQ, EIM3,
Program Manager, Outpatient Cardiac
Rehabilitation and Clinical Exercise Physiologist

“We are proud to continue to offer family training, either in person, on the phone, and for a time, virtually, to ensure caregivers are adequately prepared to manage their loved one at home,” says Jessica Norton, DPT, the program’s clinical team leader, noting that the goal is to discharge patients to their home, but if that’s not possible, they help find a suitable subacute facility.

For some patients, the next step is outpatient cardiac rehab (though you do not have to have been a Burke inpatient to participate in the program). “Burke Rehabilitation Hospital’s cardiac rehab program is a patient-centered program,” says Steigerwald. “We are motivated to empower our patients with physical activity and education.”

He explains that over the course of 36 sessions, the team prescribes exercise in a measured way, focusing on what works best for each patient. Currently, a number of safety measures are in place, including limited capacity during each session and social distancing.

Back in the spring, the program was closed for a time—and Steigerwald found that many patients were very enthusiastic once they came back. “I often say in classes: the less a person does, the less they are able to do,” he explains. “That statement really came alive during the lockdown. Our patients felt themselves getting weaker each day and they can now see firsthand how important exercise is.”

The program also underscores the importance of managing cardiac issues and preventing further complications. “The causes of heart disease are 80 percent lifestyle (exercise, diet, smoking, stress) and 20 percent genetic,” says Steigerwald. “We know that much of heart disease is preventable. February’s American Heart Month allows us to raise the volume on this fact.”

Steigerwald offers this must-know info:

It’s physician-monitored. “Burke’s cardiac rehab program is one of only a few that actually has a physician monitoring patients at all times,” he explains. The program is for patients who’ve experienced a cardiac event, such as having a stent put in, valve replacement or repair and bypass surgery, among others. To be admitted, you’ll need a prescription and a referral from your cardiologist, says Steigerwald.

Patients will be among peers. All program participants have experienced a cardiac event, which means support and camaraderie can be found. “They are on the same journey, and that is meaningful to them,” says Steigerwald.

Exercise becomes a way of life. Steigerwald explains that patients’ families are often surprised that their loved one has gotten the “exercise bug.” He explains, “A lot of our patients get their families involved in a heart-healthy lifestyle after they graduate from the program.”



For more about Burke’s inpatient cardiopulmonary program and outpatient cardiac rehabilitation program, visit www.burke.org.

Grants Help Individuals Living with Spinal Cord Injury Exercise and Socialize—Virtually

Adaptive sports and recreation are an important part of Burke’s continuum of care—and offer participants the chance to work out and participate in a setting that is specific to their needs.

“We have a very active group of individuals who usually participate in our adapted sports and recreation programs,” says Elizabeth Dominick, PT, DPT, Board-Certified Clinical Specialist in Neurologic Physical Therapy and the Program Director of the Spinal Cord Injury (SCI)/Neuro Program. “Due to Covid, we have not been able to offer the majority of those programs and many individuals didn’t have the resources to safely exercise on their own.”

That’s why the new SCI Focus on Fitness program is so vital. The program is a virtual, at-home six-week fitness regimen designed specifically for people with a spinal cord injury—and is offered to participants free of charge.

Burke is able to offer the program thanks to two grants

from the Craig T. Nielsen Foundation—one in August for \$10,000 and another in January for \$10,000. “This grant allowed us to not only support participants’ fitness goals, but also gave us the opportunity to ensure that no one was limited by lack of equipment or funding,” says Dominick. Each participant is given a “Fit Kit” with all the equipment and supplies needed to take classes at home.

The hour-long classes are held five days a week and include a mix of yoga, boxing, and, in the upcoming sessions, Zumba and meditation—all taught by certified instructors. The first sessions started in the fall, from September through January. Two new sessions are beginning in February and March.

“In addition to the health benefits, exercising provides

socialization within a peer group that is essential,” says Dominick. In fact, a former participant said that they loved the opportunity, as well as the connection to the SCI community. Plus, Dominick says that before starting, most participants weren’t exercising regularly, but during the program, class attendance is as high as 90 to 100 percent.

“It’s incredible what the power of a supportive group can do, and with the right funding, anything is possible—even in the current circumstances,” says Dominick. “We are excited to continue to find avenues to support everyone we can in achieving their fitness goals and finding the right way for them to take back their health during the pandemic.”

SPOTLIGHT

Enhancing the Patient Experience: Pen Pal Program Pairs Burke Patients and Students

“Burke’s goal, from the therapists to the physicians, to the nurses and aides, to the food services and dietary staff, is to make the patient as comfortable as possible and treat them with respect and dignity—which we hope will allow the patient to recover more easily,” says Robin Goldberg, Patient Relations Manager.

That happens through a myriad of programs that help patients feel comfortable and relaxed right from the start. For instance, as soon as they arrive at Burke, patients are matched with an Ambassador Volunteer who gives them the run-through about life at Burke—from how to use the new TV system to how much therapy they’ll be receiving to how to reserve an iPad. And it continues throughout their stay, with pet therapy (now virtual!), a cart full of books and puzzles to borrow, and even small gifts, like Thanksgiving-themed cups to celebrate the holiday.

And these services have taken on new meaning. “Patients need the extra attention and cheering up,” explains Goldberg. “They are seeing less of their loved ones, if at all, due to visitation restrictions. Therefore, it is up to the Patient Experience team to fill in those gaps and give patients the extra attention they need and deserve.”

Two recent programs filling in those gaps are Cards of Cheer, which began last spring, and provides hand-made cards (primarily made by children) and greetings to patients, and the Pen Pal Program. Launched in November, the program pairs a patient with a school-age child to exchange letters—and it has garnered lots of praise from patients, staff, and more, says Goldberg.

One pen pal pair we love: Martha Hunt Handler, author and Board President of the Wolf Conservation Center in South Salem and 8-year-old Kayla Quinn, the daughter of a Burke employee, Laura Quinn. After Handler wrote the first note, Quinn answered by writing Handler a 3-page letter—complete with a handmade wolf drawing—and the two quickly bonded.

Not only did Martha benefit immensely from the program, but “Laura made sure to email me and tell me how this has touched Kayla in an amazing way, as she had been sad about staying home so much due to Covid,” says Goldberg.

The two are still in touch. Handler gave Quinn a signed copy of her young adult novel, *Winter of the Wolf* and invited her to visit the Wolf Conservation Center.

“There’s nothing I like better than writing and receiving hand written letters, and this was especially true during my two weeks at Burke. This correspondence was my life line, as it allowed me to temporarily escape from my physical pain, boredom and loneliness (due to Covid lockdown and very limited visiting hours).”

MARTHA HUNT HANDLER, AUTHOR, BOARD
PRESIDENT OF THE WOLF CONSERVATION CENTER
IN SOUTH SALEM, NY & FORMER BURKE PATIENT

There are many ways to support the Patient Experience effort or volunteer your time at Burke. Please call Patient Experience at (914) 597-2121 to find out how.

BURKE CABINET

2020 W.M. Burke Cabinet as of 1.31.2021

Chairman's Cabinet (\$10,000+)

Anonymous
Richard J. Ahearn
Auxiliary of Burke Rehabilitation Hospital
Andrew Barnard
Julie & John Burke
Rita & James Cain
The Charles A. Mastronardi Foundation
Craig H. Neilsen Foundation
Linda & Thomas Devine
Philip & Arline Diamond
Michelle Goldman
Bonnie & Tom Grace
Thomas Grace, Jr.
Leona Kern
Barbara & Steven Kessler
Cathy & John McCarthy
Jeffrey Menkes & Susan Fox
Joseph M. Murphy
Alix & Steven J. Prince
Karen Kelsey Thomas & David Thomas
Will Rogers Institute

Executive Cabinet (\$5,000 - \$9,999)

Altman Foundation
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Jennifer C. Carter
Margaret Cataldo
Dana Comfort
Anne & Wilfred A. Finnegan
Bonnie & Tom Grace
Jennifer & Bud Gruenberg
J. David Lynn
Mary Ellen O'Connor
Nataly Ritter
The Society of the Friendly Sons
of St. Patrick
Mr. & Mrs. Alan G. Weiler

Leadership Cabinet (\$2,500 - \$4,999)

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Robin & James M. Bradley
Marion & Richard Celiberti
Lawrence C. Christianson
Pierce B.T. Crosbie
Helen & Michael J. Daly
The Feuerring Foundation
Donald E. Foley & Barbara Long

Leadership Cabinet *Cont'd*

Charles V. Glennon
Barbara Monohan
Mary El & Tony O'Callaghan
Jean & George Stephenson
Lesley & Kenneth J. Sweeney

Cornerstone Cabinet (\$1,000 - \$2,499)

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Dolores Alfredo
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John Berman
Penelope M. Carr
Henry Chung
Thomas S. Corona, Sr.
Eugene T. D'Ablemont
Cashie & Thomas E. Egan
Harriet M. Gruber
John Heanue
John Hoff
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Michael Palumbo, MD
Leslie Patel
Felix & Carol Petrillo
Keo Phanumas
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