



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

UPMC MERCY

UPMC Mercy is a non-profit, 417-bed acute-care teaching hospital located in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Founded in 1847 by the “Seven Sisters of Mercy,” UPMC Mercy was the first hospital in Pittsburgh, the world’s first Mercy Hospital, and remains southwestern Pennsylvania’s only Catholic hospital.

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In late 2018, UPMC Mercy began to transform its services to better serve older adult patients. Mercy’s status as a Level I Trauma Center, a Comprehensive Stroke Center (certified by The Joint Commission, American Heart Association, and American Stroke Association), and as the flagship location of the UPMC Rehabilitation Network, meant it was already uniquely qualified to serve this population. It is now UPMC’s preferred hospital for old adult patients, especially those with stroke or orthopedic fracture injuries, in the Pittsburgh area.

EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT’S GERIATRIC ACCREDITATION

In 2019, UPMC Mercy’s Department of Emergency Medicine (DEM) was certified Bronze under the American College of Emergency Physician’s Geriatric Emergency Department Accreditation (GEDA) program. The DEM continues to increase its competencies in relation to older-adult care, aiming to achieve Silver and eventually Gold GEDA status.

SPECIALIZED CONTINUUM OF CARE

UPMC Mercy delivers comprehensive, excellence-driven, and highly specialized hospital and outpatient services across the entire continuum of care for older adults. From nurses with advanced training in trauma, stroke, delirium, dementia, and geriatrics, to our geriatricians who play an integral role in our medical co-management model for hip fracture patients, our interdisciplinary care teams have transformed the way we provide care for older adults.

Mercy's delirium prevention program hinges on nurses collaborating with providers to identify patients at risk for delirium and to deliver preventive interventions. Additionally, our nurse-driven Dementia Activities room allows patients to spend time in a safe environment, while participating in fun and meaningful activities crafted especially for them

UPMC Mercy's robust Care Management program, led by our nurse case managers, enables our geriatric patients to follow a single-site progression from acute inpatient care through specialized rehabilitation, reducing the need for unnecessary care transitions. Nurse case managers assess the patient's goals and needs during their admission and share this information with the interdisciplinary team during daily care coordination rounds. They facilitate the "Discharge When" process, which engages the clinical team and the patient/family in assessing the patient's readiness for discharge. Finally, they connect patients and caregivers with a variety of community resources, such as the Living-At-Home program, the Living Independence for the Elderly (LIFE) Pittsburgh program, the Respite Care program, and others, so patients and their caregivers are well-equipped to transition back to the community.



STAFF EDUCATION

UPMC Mercy strives to increase its educational offerings for nurses and providers regarding geriatric medicine and care, actively partnering with the Aging Institute of UPMC Senior Services and the University of Pittsburgh. The hospital offered a Geriatric Clinical Update for nursing staff, which addressed critical elements related to geriatric care. Experts across disciplines presented on dementia, appropriately

managing dementia-related behaviors, medication management in older adults, and properly recognizing and managing delirium.

UPMC Mercy routinely offers an "Ageless Wisdom" course to all staff members. The course enhances the participant's understanding of normal changes associated with the aging process, highlights the impact that disease and disability have on an aging patient, and presents best practices to help manage changes associated with aging. The program allows participants to view aging as a positive experience, understand aging from the perspective of a patient, and identify ways healthcare professionals can best support our geriatric patients.

SAFE PATIENT HANDLING & MOBILITY (SPHM) PROGRAM

The Safe Patient Handling and Mobility (SPHM) program is a top priority for UPMC Mercy nursing executive leadership, since our caregivers are one of our most

valuable assets. The nursing leadership established a large task force to ensure adequate resources were available for frontline nursing staff to properly and safely care for and move their patients. The organization procured twenty-one new Liko lifts, one Sabina sit-to-stand lift, and one portable Freespan lift. Nursing staff from each department were selected to serve as Safety Coaches and subject matter experts for the hospital's new equipment. These Safety Coaches are responsible for training other staff within their departments as part of a "train-the-trainer" framework. Currently, 51 Safety Coaches have been trained.

A plan is underway to conduct periodic training sessions to engage these subject matter experts and to maintain their skills, knowledge base, and competencies.