

CASESTUDY

Supported Ambulation System Increases Staff Efficiency and Patient Safety

Emory Brain Health Center

Therapists working at Emory Brain Health Center in Atlanta treat a range of neurologic diseases and movement disorders. Acquiring the country's largest FreeStep SAS supported ambulation system expanded their ability to rehabilitate their broad range of patients in a staff-efficient and patient-safe environment.

Emory Brain Health Center is a 3,500-square-foot rehab center with several therapists, speech pathologists, neuro physical therapy residents, and occupational therapists on staff. Patients they treat span the range of neurologic diseases and disorders including Parkinson's, stroke, and traumatic brain injury. With so many patients coming to the facility with balance and gait issues, finding ways to rehabilitate patients more efficiently and reduce risk of injury is essential to their success.

Thanks to a gift from William C. Warran III, the center installed the nation's most extensive FreeStep SAS supported ambulation system.



Ken McDonald, patient with Parkinson's, safely treadmill trains protected from falls thanks to the FreeStep track system.

Accelerating therapy

Patients with Parkinson's disease typically present with an inability to navigate their environment with normal movement patterns due to stiffness, freezing of gait – and highly challenged balance.

The FreeStep SAS track and harness system provides patients at Emory Brain Health the freedom to move fearlessly all around the clinic – even in its occupational therapy kitchen and laundry. The system also allows patients to safely experience changes in balance and to learn how to respond physically to those changes.

“That's critical to patients learning how to safely walk in the community – and can't be learned with aides or parallel bars, as in most clinics,” explains Devra Brown, PhD, manager of the outpatient rehab program.

Protecting patients and PTs

Before the FreeStep, the staff at Emory attempted to guard patients at risk of falling while ambulating with a therapist and an aide. Such a practice can expose both patient and therapists to risk of injury. “And obviously, therapists can't prevent a fall when a patient is on a treadmill,” Dr. Brown remarks. The FreeStep allows a single therapist to train even the most unstable or obese patients without risk of injury to either patient or therapists.

Maximizing efficiency

Without the need for extra staff, Emory's FreeStep track accommodates multiple patients at one time whether treadmill training or relearning to ambulate safely over ground. By increasing staff efficiency and reducing risk of injury, the track system enabled the clinic to better meet the challenge of the changing reimbursement climate.

Watch the video at:
www.biodex.com/video/ken-emory

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FreeStep SAS
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