



the INDEPENDENT

Madonna Rehabilitation Hospitals

Fall 2021

Pediatric Stroke Survivor
RETURNS TO PLAY
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Madonna Leads the Way in
STROKE RECOVERY
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ICARE Helps Stroke Survivors
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MISSION STATEMENT

Madonna Rehabilitation Hospitals is a Catholic hospital system that provides physical medicine and rehabilitation services to children and adults throughout the nation. We rehabilitate those who have sustained injuries or disabling conditions so they can fully participate in life. We lead research to improve outcomes and prevent physical disabilities and promote wellness through community programs.

Our core values reflect Madonna's history, mission and beliefs:

Collaboration Hospitality Respect Innovation Stewardship Teaching



Madonna Rehabilitation Hospitals complies with applicable federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex. Madonna Rehabilitation Hospitals does not exclude people or treat them differently because of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex.

A letter from the President & CEO

In this issue of The Independent, we showcase Madonna's Stroke Specialty Program. First, a bit of history. In 1979, Madonna expanded its operations and established a hospital unit with 22 beds focused on stroke rehabilitation. Sponsored at that time by the Benedictine sisters, they recognized that Lincoln and the surrounding communities lacked care for individuals following a stroke that could restore independent functioning and return survivors to their homes and communities. Almost immediately after opening, the unit was full. The sisters quickly embarked on a five-year expansion plan that included a \$6 million stroke rehabilitation treatment and evaluation center. Although no longer sponsored by the Benedictine Sisters, Madonna's commitment to caring for the sick as if they were Christ and providing world-class services for those recovering from stroke has never ceased. As you read this issue, you will travel along with patients as they journey through recovery and learn about the technology under development along with the research being completed in Madonna's Institute for Rehabilitation Science and Engineering. It is an exciting and inspirational issue.

Today, we are in the midst of yet another expansion – a \$57 million building project at the Lincoln Campus that includes 59 new state-of-the-art patient rooms, expanded outpatient treatment space and additional family support areas. Forty-two years after establishing a stroke rehabilitation hospital unit, the goal is still the same – independence, the restoration of function and the return to activities that give life meaning for children and adults following stroke, brain injury, spinal cord injury and pulmonary conditions. If the founding Benedictine Sisters were here today I believe they would be proud that we have not wavered from this mission.



Paul Dongilli Jr., Ph.D.,
President and CEO

The INDEPENDENT is a magazine published three times a year for friends of Madonna. Direct questions or comments to: 402.413.4292 or info@madonna.org.

EDITORIAL STAFF

Elena Barker - Written Communications Specialist
Dan Corey - Marketing, Media and PR Specialist
Mackenzie Huck - Marketing, Media and PR Specialist
Klair Acton - Marketing and Communications Specialist
Lora Vohl - Internal Communications Specialist
Sue Carraher - Development Coordinator
Jeremy Wegner - Brand Strategist
Katie Williams - Director of Marketing and Communications



Visit Madonna.org to learn more or call 800.676.5448



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Madonna Leads the Way in STROKE RECOVERY

Every year, more than 795,000 people in the United States experience a stroke, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. That is equivalent to one stroke every 40 seconds. The face of a stroke survivor can take many forms: A 60-year-old coach. A 31-year-old nurse. Even a 2-year-old child.

Between campuses, Madonna's CARF-accredited Stroke Program serves roughly 800 stroke patients a year through a comprehensive continuum including multiple levels of inpatient care and intensive outpatient services. Our specialized medical rehabilitation program is led by board certified physicians of physical and medical rehabilitation and combines physical, occupational and speech therapy; neuropsychology; rehabilitation nursing and around-the-clock medical care to maximize recovery.

"Patients can require frequent adjustment of medications to improve control of conditions," said Dr. Samuel Bierner, Madonna's Stroke Program Medical Director. "By daily rounding, we are able to treat complications of stroke promptly, such as spasticity and mood disorders, improve alertness and increase attention."

The sooner patients can be up and moving following a stroke, the better their outcome will be. Using specialized rehabilitation technology like the Lokomat robotic gait trainer and ICARE by SportsArt, a motorized elliptical, Madonna is able to get patients who would normally be bedbound up and participating in therapy sessions sooner. This intensive approach to therapy allows patients to do many more hundreds to thousands of repetitions practicing a skilled movement, facilitating motor recovery and brain plasticity, where the brain learns to repair itself. Madonna incorporates a patient's family into the rehabilitation experience. Our staff provides training and education to patients and their family members within specially designed spaces to simulate life at home. Practicing familiar activities like cooking a meal, doing laundry and getting in and out of a vehicle helps rebuild and strengthen connections between mind and body. Family members joining together with the patient to complete these everyday activities helps to build confidence and sets the stage for a successful return to the community.

Madonna care teams and peer volunteers provide support and inspiration for stroke survivors and their loved ones



Learn more about the
Stroke Program at:
Madonna.org/Stroke



through peer support groups, counseling services and caregiver training. This holistic approach that focuses on family involvement and education promotes an environment of comfort and confidence helping to keep patients safe and motivated as they return home. “We encourage them to be around and talk with other families who have gone through similar situations as part of their recovery,” said Amy Goldman, Madonna’s Stroke Program Manager. “We also encourage them to participate in things such as recreational therapy that allow patients to do things that they enjoy in their leisure time during their stay at Madonna.”

When patients and their family leave Madonna, their recovery journey is far from over. Neuroscience research shows patients can continue to recover years after their stroke, if they are diligent in overcoming their deficits.

Madonna offers a continuum of care, catering to patients in every step of their rehabilitation journey, from inpatient to an intensive outpatient rehabilitation day program, to traditional outpatient therapy and beyond. By combining clinical expertise with technology and hospitality, we help patients return to friends, family and community. It’s the Madonna difference.



MEET OUR STAFF DR. SAMUEL BIERNER



Dr. Samuel Bierner, M.D., a physiatrist partner, oversees the patient care in Madonna’s Stroke Program. Dr. Bierner has more than 30 years of experience working with stroke

patients. He performed clinical research involving human motor control in persons with stroke as a fellow at the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke. Currently, he works with experts in biomechanics looking at gait in stroke. Bierner helped craft the medical treatment plan for Madonna’s Stroke Program, utilizing his skills and experience gained while teaching at the University of Nebraska Medical Center, one of Madonna’s acute care partners.

“Nebraska Medicine has a certified comprehensive stroke center, and Madonna as a clinical partner provides state-of-the-art rehabilitative services, meaning patients move through a complete continuum of care with the same physicians,” Bierner said.

Bierner’s knowledge combined with an individualized treatment plan and around-the-clock patient care help make Madonna a national center of excellence in stroke rehabilitation.

With a positive attitude and use of Madonna’s specialized technology, Kansas native Brad Boor walked out of Madonna just in time to enjoy Father’s Day at home with his two kids and his wife, Lexie. After suffering a stroke, Brad was determined to be back with his kids filling his days with hours of intense physical, occupational and speech therapy sessions. Brad worked extensively with the Lokomat and Functional Electrical Stimulation (FES) bike, which helped him regain use of his arm and leg.





Learn more about the Pediatric Program at: Madonna.org/Pediatrics



Pediatric Stroke Survivor RETURNS TO PLAY

Six-year-old Thomas “Jude” Walz doesn’t mind a little hard work. To him, every challenge he faces is an opportunity to grow and improve.

“He will stand out in our backyard and hit baseballs until the sun goes down,” said his mom, Carolyn. “Whatever it takes to feel like he’s mastered a skill.”

Jude’s mature outlook and dedication are a reflection of the journey he’s been on the last three years. Perseverance and determination have become a way of life for him, after a serious sinus infection at age two triggered a series of events forcing him to relearn basic skills like walking and talking. His mom describes it as the perfect storm. The wrong bacteria got into the wrong places in Jude’s body, leading to an infection in his brain. As a



“I don’t think he associated his time at Madonna as therapy or work,” Carolyn said.

“It all felt like playtime to him.”

result, while at Children’s Hospital and Medical Center, Jude suffered a stroke.

The stroke came as a shock. Jude’s parents, TJ and Carolyn, were healthy and active. His younger sister was healthy. By all accounts, Jude had been healthy too. He was in the middle of mastering normal toddler milestones when he became sick. After four weeks in the hospital, Jude came to Madonna Rehabilitation Hospitals Omaha Campus to regain his lost function. A neurologist said they were unsure if Jude would ever walk again. Madonna Physical Therapist Kirsten Demmel had other ideas.

“I remember the first day we arrived, Kirsten was helping us set goals and expectations, and she said, ‘Oh, he’ll run out of here.’ I thought to myself, there’s no way, but we needed to have that same faith,” Carolyn said.



Madonna's pediatric therapists' mission is to get children to return to play. Over a month-long inpatient stay and another eight weeks in outpatient therapy, Jude improved his gross and fine motor skills, going from sitting to standing to walking with a walker. Eventually, he was running laps around Madonna's Pediatric Unit. His speech became clearer, and after two weeks of inpatient speech therapy, Jude no longer required speech therapy.



Jude's favorite part of his time at Madonna was in occupational therapy, where he spent a lot of time in the Snoezelen Sensory Room. These rooms are specially designed to deliver stimuli to various senses, using lighting effects, color, sounds and music. Jude always called it "the bubble room," because of the large, interactive bubble tube he could change the color of, feel the vibrations of, or simply practice eye movements with by tracking bubbles.

"I don't think he associated his time at Madonna as therapy or work," Carolyn said. "It all felt like playtime to him."



After running out the doors of Madonna, just like his doctors, nurses and therapists predicted, Jude hasn't stopped. Three years post-stroke, he's every bit an active, playful, healthy child. He's just started kindergarten, and plays several sports, including soccer and baseball. The pediatric outdoor activity center at Madonna's Omaha Campus bears his name, encouraging other pediatric patients to return to play.

While at Madonna, Jude relearned to walk with the help of a gait trainer (Top). Now, he's able to participate in activities like climbing trees with his siblings in his backyard and playing on the playground with kindergarten classmates.



Dr. Sheilah Snyder



ACUTE CARE PARTNERS

Children require a different approach to rehabilitation. Madonna employs the expertise of skilled clinicians with in-depth knowledge of the unique needs of pediatric patients by teaming up with acute care partners like Children's Hospital and Medical Center. This partnership ensures a seamless transition to the rehabilitation hospital and keeps communication between medical teams clear and open. Doctors from Children's Specialty Physicians oversee the pediatric care team at Madonna, meaning the same physicians that attended to Jude at Children's also did daily patient rounding with him at Madonna.

"Having an inpatient pediatric rehabilitation unit is incredibly rare, and Omaha and Lincoln are so lucky to have the resources at Madonna close to home," said Dr. Sheilah Snyder, a pediatric hospitalist. "This partnership between Madonna, Children's and the patient's family really becomes its own community of people all striving to see kids recover to their full potential."

Speech-Language Pathologists BRING VOICES BACK



Stroke survivor Andrea Kuester works with her speech-language pathologists to practice saying short words and phrases. This exercise is retraining Andrea's brain to overcome her aphasia, a condition that affects one's ability to speak, write and understand language.

After individuals survive a stroke, they may face a variety of deficits, both physically and cognitively. Madonna's speech-language pathologists (SLPs) combine specialized technology and expertise in stroke rehabilitation to help patients set and attain short and long-term goals.

No two stroke patients progress at the same pace or in the same manner, even if their strokes are of similar size and occur in similar locations. It is important that SLPs, as well as all other therapy disciplines, create an individualized plan of care for each patient based on their unique set of strengths and deficits. Crafting a specialized plan of care starts from the first meeting between patient and therapist.

"We ask each patient to do a variety of tasks relating to different areas of discipline, like swallowing, motor speech, voice and cognitive-communication," said Jett Stenson, a Madonna speech-language pathologist. "We may ask the patient to eat or drink a variety of foods and liquids, answer orientation questions, and follow commands."

SLPs must identify which deficits are most impacting a patient's day-to-day functioning and prioritize tasks that address those areas. If a patient's speech is affected, therapists can use compensatory techniques to allow for other forms of communication using iPads or written prompts. If the goal is to relearn how to eat solid food safely, patients can utilize technology like the VitalStim, to retrain muscles to chew and swallow.

From the start of the communication process, identifying the correct words and phrases in the brain, to the muscle movement to form those words, to receiving and understanding a response, Madonna's SLPs are able to assist patients in improving their communication at every step of their rehabilitation journey.

"We use whatever means are necessary to guarantee that our patients are being heard, whether through speech, pictures, gestures, writing or a communication device," said Cait Scott, a Madonna speech-language pathologist.



THE BEST PLACE TO WORK

For more than 60 years, Madonna Rehabilitation Hospitals has provided hope and healing to individuals recovering from serious injury or illness. Between our two campuses in Lincoln and Omaha, in 2020, we admitted 2,309 patients from 19 states, spanning from Washington to Delaware.

As we continue to expand our footprint locally, regionally and nationally, we are honored to be recognized as a Best Places to Work, finishing in 3rd place for the extra-large category. The honor is thanks to our diverse interdisciplinary team of compassionate employees, who play a vital role in helping patients reclaim their independence through expertise, leading-edge technology and passion.

Employees say our mission is a deciding factor when it comes to choosing to work for us and why they stay. Combined with our core values, we strive to create a work culture that's collaborative, innovative, supportive and welcoming. We value and recognize top talent, empowering individuals to use their strengths and knowledge to benefit co-workers, patients, residents, volunteers and visitors.

REHABILITATION NURSES: REAL HEROES

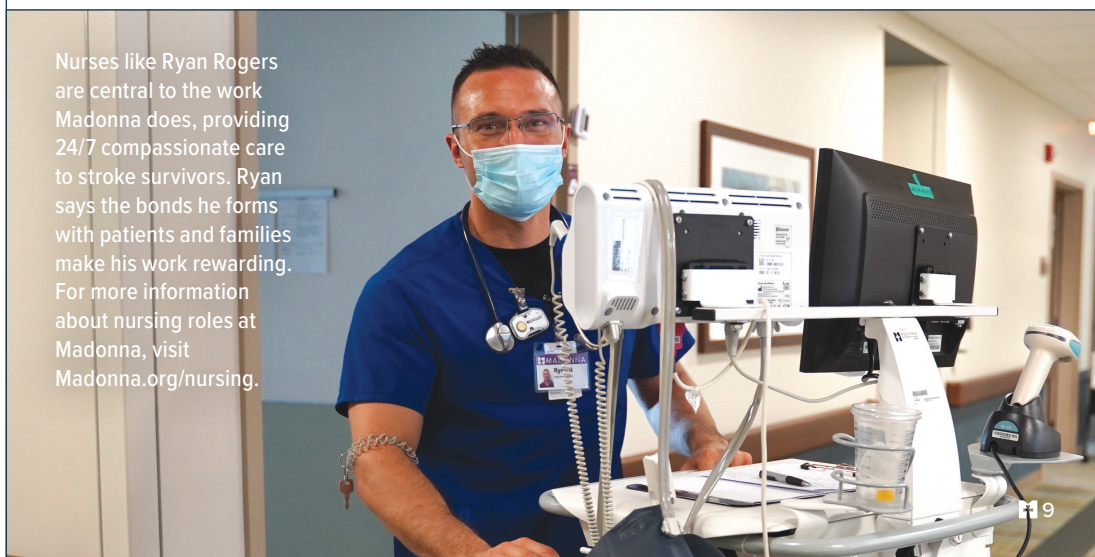
While at Madonna, patients recovering from a stroke receive around-the-clock care from a dedicated team of nurses who specialize in rehabilitation. Many of our nurses have also earned the distinction of the Certified Rehabilitation Registered Nurse (CRRN) certification, a highly regarded professional credential in the field of rehabilitation nursing. These specialized nurses collaborate with our other health care team members including physicians, physical therapists, occupational therapists, neuropsychologists, speech therapists and others to provide a comprehensive care plan based on each patient's needs. After a stroke, many patients have to relearn daily activities, and our experienced nurses help them meet their therapy goals, such as bathing, bowel and bladder retraining, dressing and eating. Madonna's nurses are experts in assisting and encouraging patients to reach their highest level of independence.

"We are assisting our patients in regaining their lives and are integral to that reclamation," said Ross Sukup, a nursing supervisor.

Because length of stay at Madonna is longer than in an acute care setting, typically 28 days or more, nurses spend more time with patients and form deep bonds with both patients and their families. Our nurses help families with caregiver training, encouraging them to feel comfortable and confident in caring for their loved one when they return home. They also provide reassurance as patients navigate the ups and downs of rehabilitation.

"We are supportive and steadfast in the valleys of the patient's rehabilitation journey, and we celebrate the journey's peaks which can even be the seemingly smallest of gains such as moving a finger," Sukup said.

Nurses like Ryan Rogers are central to the work Madonna does, providing 24/7 compassionate care to stroke survivors. Ryan says the bonds he forms with patients and families make his work rewarding. For more information about nursing roles at Madonna, visit [Madonna.org/nursing](https://www.madonna.org/nursing).



Seasoned Nurse & Mom SHARES HER STORY



These days, Jamie Richards is back to spending her summers camping, fishing and gardening. Jamie, who just turned 40, loves to grow tomatoes, cucumbers and peppers.

But in 2013, at age 31, the registered nurse from Holdrege, Nebraska had to pause everything when she experienced a severe headache. With her knowledge and background, the 14-year veteran nurse knew her symptoms were more than a migraine. She was having a stroke.

“It was scary because I realized what was happening,” said Jamie. Suddenly, the busy wife and mother of two couldn’t walk or talk normally. She became disoriented and experienced double vision, memory and cognition issues. She became hypersensitive and too much stimuli made her anxious.

Jamie spent almost 12 weeks at Madonna completing inpatient care followed by the outpatient rehabilitation day program. This isn’t what the 31-year-old mother had in mind.

“I remember sitting in my room just crying and I’m thinking I need to have a talk with God and I need to talk to him because this isn’t fair,” Jamie recalled. “And that day is when everything shifted. I realized that so many worse things could have happened. I could have died. My kids could be without their mom. I need to be grateful, I need to be thankful, and I need to move forward.”

Move forward she did. Jamie credits the staff at Madonna for helping her through the tough times but also catering to her interests during therapy. She spent time helping student nurses at Madonna because the care team knew of her passion for nursing.

“They always took it back to nursing or gardening or things that I loved, things that I cared about so I could return to those things,” said Jamie, who now harvests 15 different types of tomatoes in her garden.



Jamie is back attending her garden, which she loves to do during the summer months. On top of fishing and camping, Jamie loves to grow tomatoes, cucumbers and peppers. She also loves growing flowers. Therapists at Madonna focused on Jamie's love for gardening during her recovery.



Jamie took advantage of utilizing Madonna's specialized equipment, specifically the ICARE by SportsArt, a motor-assisted elliptical, which helped her regain her balance and walking motion. She relearned to grocery shop and cook in Madonna's Independence Square, a simulated community that helps patients re-learn activities in everyday life.

Today, Jamie is back to working full-time at Phelps Memorial Health Center in Holdrege. When not gardening, she enjoys being on her pontoon at Harlan County Lake with her family.

Jamie also spends her time connecting with other stroke survivors by attending the annual Retreat and Refresh Stroke Camp that Madonna helps to sponsor. "It's neat to see other people's progress," Jamie said.

Jamie continues to be grateful for the Madonna staff who helped her return to family, community and nursing. "They were just fantastic. They loved me and they helped me and they never gave up on me ever. I said, 'this is my goal.' They said, 'we will get you there'."

RETREAT & REFRESH STROKE CAMP: A DECADE OF FUN

This past August, Retreat & Refresh Stroke Camp celebrated its 10th anniversary in Nebraska. The action-packed weekend at Carol Joy Holling Conference & Retreat Center in Ashland, Nebraska is designed for creating fun and normalcy for stroke survivors and their loved ones.

Amy Goldman, Stroke Program Manager at Madonna, loves all aspects of Stroke Camp.

"It is so rewarding and inspiring for our staff (volunteers) to see their former patients and how far they have come since discharging from Madonna," said Goldman.

Each year, 20 stroke survivors along with 20 caregivers attend camp. They are paired with volunteers to lend a helping hand. The volunteers at the camp include clinicians from Madonna who are able to see first-hand how far some stroke patients have come. Activities include paddle boating, crafts, and of course, camp fires with smores!

"You meet people that are a lot like you," said Jamie Richards, a former stroke patient who attends annually. "It's so fun because you get to see the progress people make from year-to-year."



Retreat & Refresh Stroke Camp offers relaxation, tips, activities, entertainment, laughter, music, games, crafts and more, facilitated by volunteers like Madonna's Mary Reece and Carol Olson.

Lead from **EXPERIENCE**



Occupational therapist Nicole Brown instructs Chris Abboud on use of the ArmeoSpring to strengthen his left side and re-establish his grip for activities he enjoys like tennis and golf.

Omaha attorney and former State Senator Chris Abboud never thought that tying his shoe laces by himself would be considered a major achievement.

“I was so proud of myself that day,” Chris recalls, reflecting on his recovery from a stroke earlier this year.

Chris noticed some facial weakness at the beginning of a February weekend. Twenty years ago, he had Bells Palsy, a condition that involves facial muscle paralysis and thought it might be a recurrence. With plans to follow-up with his doctor after the weekend, he went about his slate of activities. He

felt unusually sluggish during his Saturday tennis game and by Sunday, he couldn’t get up off the floor.

After his stroke diagnosis at the University of Nebraska Medical Center, Chris transferred to Madonna’s Omaha Campus where he made steady progress. Chris used rehabilitation technology, like Madonna’s ICARE by SportsArt, the motorized elliptical that helped Chris build strength, balance and stamina. The ArmeoSpring upper extremity exoskeleton helped Chris strengthen his left side and re-establish his grip. “I learned a lot about the neuroplasticity of the brain,” Chris

said. “We really take for granted the capacity of our brain to rewire itself in recovery.”

Equally impressed by the expertise of Madonna’s staff, he shared, “They kept me focused but didn’t make promises. My goal was to walk without a walker and to use my left hand again. I didn’t expect to hit a home run. I just wanted to get a base hit,” he recalled. After his inpatient stay, Chris transitioned to outpatient physical and occupational therapy.

In sharing Chris’ diagnosis with friends, his wife, Ann Marie, said, “I think there is a lack of awareness on the part of the general public about stroke.” A lot of people don’t realize that there are varying degrees of severity with stroke and often jump to the worst case scenario, she added.

Thankful for Chris’ recovery, the Abbouds generously offered to serve as the chair couple for Miracle Night for Madonna on December 3, 2021. When giving of their time and resources, Ann Marie says she and her husband seek out organizations that strengthen the community.

“Madonna gave me back my husband,” she said, adding, “I want to help Madonna grow.”

Generosity IN ACTION

Imagine regaining the freedom to traverse a variety of terrains in the great outdoors. The Action Trackchair, secured through the generosity of donors at Miracle Night for Madonna 2020, provides just that sense of independence.

Westen Erwin was among the first to use the Action Trackchair when it arrived at Madonna this year. The 14-year-old from Augusta, Kansas, survived a spinal cord injury in a motocross accident.

“This new piece of equipment allows patients like Westen to have those real-life experiences while they’re here at Madonna, helping them get back to doing what they love most,” said Scott Fandrich, Westen’s physical therapist. Using treads instead of wheels, the Action Trackchair can go places where an ordinary wheelchair cannot.

Madonna Ambassadors, a team of past patients, raised the initial funds for the Action Trackchair and another wheelchair technology called the Omeo prior to last year’s Miracle Night for Madonna gala. Their gift inspired generous sponsors and Miracle Night supporters to donate funds to purchase a Trackchair and an Omeo for both the Omaha and Lincoln campuses.



Every sport and hobby Westen Erwin enjoys involves being outside so the new Action Trackchair proved to be a great therapy tool.

SAVE THE DATE FOR MIRACLE NIGHT



The festive season of giving kicks off with the 4th Annual Miracle Night for Madonna, on Friday, December 3, 2021. The popular gala event, which rotates between Omaha and Lincoln, will be held at The Empire Room at Midtown Crossing in Omaha. The event will include a virtual silent auction with a wide variety of auction items, to allow all our donors and friends, from coast-to-coast, to participate.

As the chair couple for the gala, Chris and Ann Marie Abboud are leading a dedicated volunteer committee planning an evening that truly celebrates the work of Madonna. Generous sponsors continue to make this event a success each year. Guests at Miracle Night will enjoy a cocktail party, a delicious dinner, exciting silent and live auctions and a “Technology Showcase” which allows friends and donors to raise their paddle to help Madonna purchase leading-edge technology to directly benefit our patients.

Whether participating virtually or in person, you will be able to bid on a wide array of exciting silent auction items. You also will have the opportunity to match funds raised by past patients to purchase 3D printers for the Research Institute on both the Omaha and Lincoln campuses.

Check out our website at [Madonna.org/Foundation](https://www.Madonna.org/Foundation) for all the latest information.

Physical therapist Michala Remund works with Shannon Belk during her session on the ICARE. Developed in Madonna's Research Institute, the ICARE is a motorized elliptical technology being used internationally to improve walking and fitness following serious illness or injury.

Stroke Survivor & Spouse PAY IT FORWARD

In 2009, Shannon Belk was the picture of health. At 38 years old, she was traveling for the pharmaceutical industry and had just completed a half marathon when the unthinkable happened.

While working out in a hotel gym in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Shannon experienced a stroke. Her brain swelled as she lay on the gym floor, unaided for two hours until emergency services were called.

Shannon spent 15 days in a South Dakota intensive care unit, undergoing an MRI twice a day to monitor changes in her brain. The stroke caused paralysis on the entire left side of her body. After five weeks of inpatient care, she transitioned to outpatient therapy, moving to Indiana to be closer to her future husband.

Shannon's journey to Madonna took seven years. She

married Mark Belk in 2013 and the couple eventually moved to Omaha in 2016, creating what Mark describes as "a stroke-friendly environment" in their home for safety and stability.



"Shortly after we arrived, we heard talk that Madonna was opening a hospital in Omaha," Shannon recalled. "I got on the phone and was able to get an appointment the first month they were open." For the past five years, Shannon has been coming to Madonna for therapy twice a week, except during the height of the pandemic, when she completed home exercises. She appreciates both the technology and the expertise Madonna has to offer.

While in therapy and throughout the day, Shannon recites two special Bible verses:
"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."
- Philippians 4:13 and 'For I know the plans I have for

you,’ declares the Lord. ‘Plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.’ – Jeremiah 29:11. I have these verses hanging in our home and inscribed on jewelry,” she added.

Since settling in Omaha, the Belks have committed their time, energy and resources to Madonna – particularly toward the stroke program. The couple got involved from the beginning with the Omaha Campus stroke support group, even catering meals for participants. Before the pandemic, Mark often would visit stroke survivors at the hospital.

“Recovery may take time, but every day could be better, so I would just say, stick with it. Don’t give up and keep trying. Keep your faith and your hope,” said Mark.

In 2019, Shannon served as an ambassador for the Miracle Night for Madonna gala, bringing in funds for a driver retraining simulator. Meanwhile, Mark got to work raising dollars for a recumbent bicycle for the Omaha Campus. Bicycling is a recreational pastime the Belks both enjoy.

Mark recently joined the Madonna Foundation Board and serves on the Miracle Night for Madonna Committee, putting his nearly 30 years of corporate leadership in technology, sales and marketing to work.

“I am excited to help unlock funds to support Madonna’s mission,” he said.

Awe-Inspiring OUTCOMES

By Melissa Murante, Madonna Foundation Board Member

When I think about Madonna, words like “miraculous, awe-inspiring and life-changing” immediately come to mind.

I joined the Foundation Board of Directors in 2017 but my first experience with Madonna was earlier. My nephew’s friend was in a motorcross accident and his prognosis was dire. Once he transferred to Madonna, he had the hope and tools he needed to start the long process of recovery.

Today, he lives a very full life. He has a full-time job, a relationship and races cars in his free time. The only way this is possible is through that young man’s commitment to recovery and Madonna’s commitment to him.

Madonna’s technology and innovation are remarkable. The staff and administration are



constantly working to improve patient outcomes. In support of these advances, my husband and I have been monthly donors for the past several years. We appreciate the opportunity to automate our giving so Madonna can count on our support.

As a Foundation Board member, I am honored to even play a small part in Madonna’s mission to help patients recover and return to their lives.

STROKE CAMP SCHOLARSHIP

Madonna Foundation is a proud sponsor of the Retreat and Refresh Stroke Camp in Ashland, Neb. The Oliveros family of Lincoln honors the memory of Stephanie Oliveros Wever, a former Madonna patient, by sponsoring an annual camp scholarship which covers the cost for a stroke survivor and caregiver to attend (minus a \$25 deposit).



Stephanie, who passed away on Christmas Day 2015, had two strokes at the age of 22, leaving her paralyzed on the left side. Her goal was to walk down the aisle on her wedding day, which she accomplished with her father and grandfather at her side.

ICARE Helps Stroke Survivors **WALK AGAIN**

Stroke is a leading cause of long-term disability among adults. Stroke survivors often experience a decline in their fitness level due to walking deficits caused by muscle weakness and balance and gait impairments. These challenges can result in a heightened fall risk. In addition, prolonged inactivity puts survivors at higher risk of subsequent stroke, cardiovascular disease and other secondary conditions.

Madonna's Institute for Rehabilitation Science and Engineering recognized these challenges and developed specialized technology to return individuals with neurologic disorders to their highest level of independence as well as the activities that give their lives meaning and purpose.

The Madonna ICARE by SportsArt helps patients, like stroke survivors, regain or retain their walking ability and levels of physical fitness. The ICARE is an elliptical that integrates a body weight support system and special motor that can assist users in training at variable speeds and levels of assistance. Early on in recovery, patients can utilize more support from the machine while still practicing repeated arm and leg movements. As a stroke survivor gets stronger, they can override the motor by pushing at a faster speed than the device is set.



Learn more about the Institute at:
Madonna.org/Institute





MEDICAL REHABILITATION FOLLOWING A STROKE

Madonna takes pride in its CARF accredited Stroke Rehabilitation Program that serves adults and children from across the country who benefit from the combination of holistic caring and specialized technology.

There are many benefits to choosing an inpatient rehabilitation hospital like Madonna. According to a 2014 study provided by the American Medical Rehabilitation Provider Association (AMRPA), clinically comparable patients returned home more than two weeks earlier if they received care at an inpatient rehabilitation hospital versus a skilled nursing facility.

Each patient at Madonna benefits from a physiatrist leading their care. The patient's care team is led by a board certified doctor in physical medicine and rehabilitation. From strengthening communication skills to improving balance, each patient's treatment is specific to their needs.

The ICARE helps patients take on multiple challenges simultaneously. It addresses the mass repetition needed to regain walking-like activity all while promoting balance, strength and stamina. The ICARE can help stroke survivors reach their highest level of independence while doing activities they love.

"Following a stroke, many individuals have challenges walking, reaching, balancing and staying physically active," said Dr. Judy Burnfield, Director of Madonna's Institute for Rehabilitation Science and Engineering.

"The beauty of the ICARE is that it can take on multiple challenges simultaneously. It addresses the mass repetition needed to regain a walking-like activity while promoting balance, strength and stamina through dynamic pedal motion, different hand grips, adjustable speed and motor assistance."

Institute researchers conducted a study on the use of the ICARE in rehabilitation following a stroke. The study found that training at an increased speed on the ICARE promoted a more optimal gait pattern including longer strides, better symmetry, greater muscle activation and more physical activity level overall. These increases in muscle use and stamina allowed participants to further engage in the mass repetitions necessary to re-establish neuromuscular pathways in the brain responsible for motor function.

"By helping patients regain the walking ability and stamina, when, for example, they go to a football game, they can get there faster and have the energy to enjoy the game. Then, they're more likely to go to the game the next week and continue that cycle of being more and more active," said Burnfield.

Why Choose Inpatient Rehabilitation

Rehabilitation Hospitals vs. Skilled Nursing Facilities

Patients returned home
17 DAYS EARLIER*



10% fewer hospital readmissions per year*



92% maintained or improved in areas such as self-cares, mobility, communication and thinking skills



66% have returned to work or school

*According to AMRPA, copyright 2021. <https://patient.amrpa.org/Choosing-Care/Infographics-Tip-Sheets/Why-Medical-Rehabilitation-Matters>

Rob Meador and his granddaughter, Davy Joy (pictured right), practice archery skills at the Nebraska Outdoor Education Center, where Rob volunteers his time coaching. Davy started getting into the sport at 7 years old with her favorite coach, her “Pa.”



Learn more about
Rob's story at:
Madonna.org/RobM

Mentor Takes Aim at NEW NORMAL

“My biggest goal at the time was to come home and be with my wife, at our home we’ve shared memories in for over 30 years,” said Lincoln native Rob Meador.

Six years ago, Rob suffered a severe stroke that left him fighting for his life. Rob spent three weeks in the ICU before transferring to Madonna Rehabilitation Specialty Hospital on the Lincoln campus. When he arrived, a ventilator controlled his breathing and he was unable to swallow or move his body. Rob expressed how hard it was after waking up and realizing how much of his independence he lost. “I had to relearn how to eat food again, breathe on my own and stand up on my own two feet.”



“It is a blessing to help others learn the sport. I cannot shoot any longer, but I can help others to be successful and enjoy a sport I love.”

Over a year’s time, the husband, father and grandfather experienced the kindness of God in a thousand unexpected ways. “My family and I witnessed it through the daily patience, tenacity and fidelity of the nurses and therapists,” said Rob, whose strong faith guides his life.

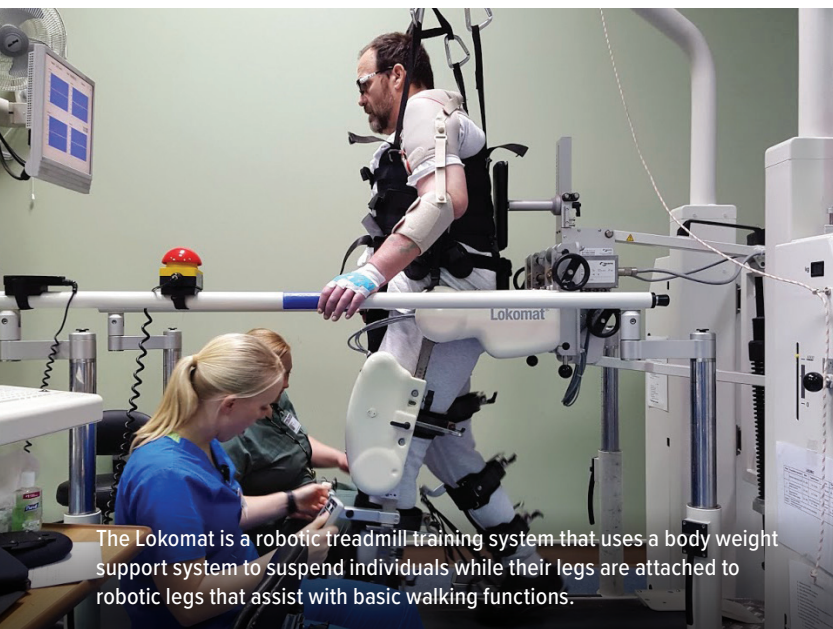
Rob’s rehabilitation journey took him through Madonna’s full continuum of care beginning with the Specialty Hospital where physicians and nurses managed his complex medical condition, respiratory therapists weaned him off the ventilator and therapies began to build his stamina. Once Rob could breathe independently, swallow and sustain two to three hours of therapies, he transitioned to Madonna’s Rehabilitation Hospital housed on

the Lincoln campus. Here, he was able to make significant gains, transitioning from a wheelchair to a walker in physical therapy with the use of specialized technology, finding his voice again in speech therapy and relearning to feed himself in occupational therapy.

Rob's first big milestone gave him the confidence to fight harder. "All I wanted to do is use the Lokomat and eventually I was able to. It was technology that helped me to stand, then slowly take steps. Over time, we would add more weight until I was able to take steps on my own."

From there, Rob spent a short time in Madonna's Transitional Care Unit honing the skills needed to return home and enter Madonna's intensive Outpatient Rehabilitation Day Program, which allowed Rob to continue taking steps toward independence and achieving milestones like walking independently and refining his speech.

A life-long outdoor enthusiast, Rob enjoys fishing, hunting and archery. Following his recovery, he was anxious to return to the activities that gave his life meaning. Today, Rob volunteers as an archery instructor



The Lokomat is a robotic treadmill training system that uses a body weight support system to suspend individuals while their legs are attached to robotic legs that assist with basic walking functions.

at the Game and Parks Outdoor Education Center and is the assistant coach for the archery team at Lincoln East High School, even taking the Spartans to a first place finish at the state competition.

"I enjoy being able to help other people learn archery. It is something that I loved to do. It is a blessing to help others learn the sport. I cannot shoot any longer, but I can help others to be successful and enjoy a sport I love."



MADONNA'S CONTINUUM OF CARE

Adults and children who sustain serious injuries or disabling conditions are frequently sent to trauma hospitals to stabilize their medical condition. The next step in the recovery process is to move to a hospital that specializes in intensive physical and medical rehabilitation to help them regain the highest level of independence. As a leader in rehabilitation, Madonna's sole focus is to help people regain their independence.

Madonna is one of the largest freestanding rehabilitation hospital systems in the United States. We provide a full continuum of rehabilitative care, including:

- **SPECIALTY HOSPITALS**
A step down from the intensive care unit (ICU) in acute care, Madonna Rehabilitation Specialty Hospital focuses on rehabilitation of patients with complex medical conditions, chronic illness or catastrophic injury with a goal of tolerating increased activity in order to move to the next level of care. Specialty hospital care includes daily physician visits and round-the-clock rehabilitation nursing care.
- **REHABILITATION HOSPITAL**
Comprehensive coordinated, interdisciplinary medical rehabilitation with a goal of three-plus hours of therapy per day and discharge to a community setting. Rehabilitation hospital care includes daily physician visits and round-the-clock rehabilitation nursing care.
- **TRANSITIONAL CARE UNIT (TCU)**
A skilled nursing program providing patients with daily skilled services.
- **REHABILITATION DAY PROGRAM**
Our intensive rehabilitation day program provides coordinated outpatient speech, occupational and physical therapies with physician and nursing oversight focusing on a patients' reintegration to community, work or school.

2021 Goal Awards RECIPIENTS

Since 1994, the Goal Awards has honored patients for their outstanding courage and determination as they completed their rehabilitation, returned to their communities and resumed their life roles.



Caleb Tobias Brain Injury Survivor

A morning commute to school for Caleb Tobias took a near fatal turn in March 2019 after a Ford SUV ran a stop sign, slamming into the family sedan the then 13-year-old was a passenger in. For Caleb, the crash's impact fractured his pelvis and caused massive facial and cranial injuries. He was in a fight for his life at Wesley Medical Center in Wichita, Kansas, and while doctors offered little hope of survival, neither Caleb, nor his parents, gave up hope. Two months and eight blood transfusions later, Caleb arrived at Madonna's Lincoln Campus. Despite losing 25 percent of his body weight, breaking nearly every bone in his face and losing his vision, Caleb persevered. As his brain healed, his personality and humor shined through. Specialized technology allowed him to make gains which continued through the outpatient Rehabilitation Day Program. Caleb is now a high school sophomore who still loves to play the drums, has mastered Braille, runs and lifts weights.



Chris Maxwell Guillain-Barré Syndrome (GBS) Survivor

In February 2019, Chris Maxwell experienced numbness and tingling in his fingers and toes, back pain and insomnia. Chris was diagnosed with a severe form of Guillain-Barré syndrome (GBS), a rare, neurological disorder that occurs when the body attacks the peripheral nerves outside the brain and spinal cord. Chris spent six weeks at Avera McKennan Hospital in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, before making his way to Madonna's Lincoln Campus for extensive rehabilitation through the continuum. Early on, the husband, father of four and small business owner couldn't breathe, eat, talk or even blink on his own. Progress was painstakingly slow. However, Chris maintained a positive, enthusiastic attitude infused with gratitude and hope. He left Madonna using a walker. Two years later, he returned to the capital city, completing a victory lap by crossing the finish line of the 2021 Lincoln half marathon.



Learn more about this year's recipients at:
Madonna.org/GoalAwards



Amber Becker Multiple Sclerosis/Complex Medical Survivor

Amber Becker woke up to numbness on her left side 19 days after the birth of her youngest child in November 2019. Thinking she had slept wrong, Amber drove herself to CHI Lakeside Hospital's Emergency Room. Within 24 hours, her health had quickly deteriorated. An MRI revealed demyelination in her brain causing the neurological problems. However, doctors were unable to pinpoint an exact diagnosis. Ten days later, she arrived at Madonna's Omaha Campus, determined to get back to her life role as a devoted wife and mom. Amber's care team customized a therapy plan to allow her to continue providing nourishment for her young son. A month later, Amber returned home to her family. Further tests revealed a rare form of Multiple Sclerosis (MS) that required immediate chemotherapy. Despite the diagnosis and treatment, Amber's positive attitude never wavered and when able, she continued with outpatient therapy. Today she's grateful to be back to full-time mom duties.



Mallory Hammer (Mitchell) Brain Injury Survivor

Mallory Hammer's marriage and college graduation plans were put on hold in March 2018 after a dental procedure caused a severe brain injury. Mallory, then 21, transferred to the University of Kansas for care and was placed in a coma. There, doctors remained guarded about her future. Arriving to Madonna's Omaha Campus a month later, Mallory was unable to walk, eat or talk and barely able to keep her eyes open. For the next six months, she worked hard in therapy, developing tight bonds with her care team and fellow patients. Dubbed #MiracleMallory by family and friends, once back home in St. Marys, Kansas, her brain continued to heal in outpatient therapy. As she made gains, she also resumed her goals of graduating college and marrying fiancé Kyle in October 2020. Today, Mallory is a small business owner, standing, walking and talking independently and optimistic for the future.

Celebrating 5 Years of HOPE & HEALING



October marks five years since Madonna's Omaha Campus first began offering hope and healing to the community. Since then, thousands of adults and children have benefitted from the world-class care they've received following an illness or injury.

A Clear Vision

Results from a 2012 independent study revealed more than 1,300 individuals qualified for rehabilitative care each year, but were referred to nursing homes or sent home instead. Thanks to visionary leadership coupled with passionate donors, outstanding partnerships and community support, on Sept. 29, 2016, the \$93 million Omaha Campus became a reality, helping fill that void in Omaha's health care continuum.

A New Era of Specialized Physician Rehabilitation

The 260,000 square-foot, 110-private room hospital was specially designed for rehabilitative care. Warm, inviting spaces coupled with specialized technology and expertly trained staff help patients regain their lives. Other features include Independence Square—a simulated community for patients to practice daily independent living skills, such as driving, laundry and grocery shopping—a warm-water pool and chapel. Outside, thoughtfully landscaped walkways and courtyards offer ample rehabilitation opportunities in a natural setting.

From the beginning, Madonna has partnered with the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) and its primary clinical partner, Nebraska Medicine, for physician support for patients. In addition, the partnership

established the physical medicine and rehabilitation (PM&R) residency program where medical students and residents train at the campus. The program, now in its fourth year, is a first-of-its-kind in a five-state region.

The collaboration combined with the community's focus on cancer research, treatment and education, has spurred Madonna to develop a specialized rehabilitation program for cancer survivors and their unique needs before, during and after treatment. The program addresses the functional issues related to a cancer diagnosis and provides preventative and restorative strategies so that each individual can achieve the highest level of independence possible.

In 2020, Madonna further expanded its footprint to keep pace with the growing demand for outpatient psychiatry services, with the opening of the Physicians Clinic. The 7,800 square-foot clinic enhances training opportunities for the PM&R residency program and provides a variety of specialized outpatient services including concussion assessments and neuro vision services and is supported by Madonna's expert therapy services.

Meet Madonna's NEW PHYSICIANS

Dr. Jack Lionberger

Lincoln campus hospitalist Dr. Jack Lionberger is a Nebraska native who grew up on a farm south of Lincoln. He received his medical degree and a Ph.D. from the University of Nebraska Medical Center. Lionberger went on to complete his internal medicine residency from the University of Wisconsin followed by a medical oncology fellowship at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center in Seattle, Washington. Then Lionberger completed a fellowship on genetics of aging with the University of Washington Pathology department. Lionberger is board certified in internal medicine and has special interests in teaching, leading and cancer research. Prior to Madonna, Lionberger worked as a hospitalist for Inpatient Physician Services with Bryan Health in Lincoln.



Dr. Charito Go

Dr. Go joins the Omaha Campus as a physiatrist. Originally from the Philippines, Go earned her medical degree from Manila Central University. She then moved to the U.S. to complete her internal medicine internship at Howard University Hospital in Washington, D.C., and a residency in physical medicine and rehabilitation at the National Rehabilitation Hospital in Washington, D.C. Go is board certified in physical medicine and rehabilitation. In her role, Go is the attending physician for a variety of neurological patients including stroke and cancer survivors. She is also a faculty member with the physical medicine and rehabilitation (PM&R) residency program, a partnership with Madonna and the University of Nebraska Medical Center and its clinical partner, Nebraska Medicine.



Dr. Eva Lopez

Dr. Eva Lopez joined the Lincoln Campus as a staff hospitalist in September. Born and raised in Texas, Lopez earned her medical degree from the University of Texas Health Science Center in San Antonio before completing an internal medicine internship and residency at the University of Oklahoma Health Science Department of Medicine in Oklahoma City. Lopez is board certified in internal medicine and has a wealth of primary care experience including two decades as a hospitalist at various health care organizations, including most recently at Health Texas Medical Group since 2019. Over the years, she has also been passionate about preventative health care and weight loss management.



Dr. Julie Lyon

An Idaho native, Dr. Julie Lyon joins Madonna's Lincoln Campus in November as a hospitalist with more than 15 years' experience. Lyon is board certified in internal medicine and received her medical degree from the University of Washington School of Medicine before completing her residency at Inland Empire Hospital Services Association in Spokane, Washington. Along with her wealth of hospitalist experience, Lyon's background includes training medical, pharmacy and nursing students; interns and residents in internal and family medicine; physician assistants; nurse practitioners and patients and their families. Prior to Madonna, Lyon worked on the hospitalist team at St. Luke's Internal Medicine Clinic in Nampa, Idaho.



ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED



The Bob & Mary Zender Meditation Garden, north of the Chapel on the Lincoln Campus, was dedicated in 2016 thanks to a generous gift from the Zender's daughter, Kris Peterson. The garden features a soothing waterfall, ample seating and shady spots to provide a welcome respite for patients, families and employees. Outdoor spaces are a favorite among Madonna therapists to incorporate cherished hobbies and recreational activities, helping patients regain independence and participate in meaningful activities.

On the front: Jude Walz races his sister, Mary, near their home in Leawood, Kansas. After surviving a stroke in 2018, Jude worked hard in therapy to remaster childhood milestones like walking. Now the kindergartener doesn't slow down!

At Madonna Rehabilitation Hospitals, we combine heartfelt hospitality with unmatched innovation and education. Our rehabilitation programs are world class. Our clinical expertise, rehabilitation research and state-of-the-art equipment provide the tools to help all patients, even those whose diagnoses pose the most complex challenges. Our investment in exceptional talent, groundbreaking technology and progressive treatments is changing the face of rehabilitation.

Hospital: 402.413.3000 | Admissions: 402.486.8260 | Toll Free: 800.676.5448 | Locations in Omaha & Lincoln