

Questions to Ask of Post-Rehabilitation Facilities: Client Handout

What are the goals for your participants? Purpose of facility?

- Health & Wellness
- Weight training or strengthening intact muscles
- Recovery or strengthening of involved muscles
- Improve cardiopulmonary function
- Improve endurance
- Improve flexibility
- Weight management
- Practice functional activities (mat/bed activities, transfers, balance, etc.)
- Multi-purpose

Facility: Is this facility accessible?

- Access to medical assistance (on site or call 911)
- Enough room between equipment to maneuver wheelchairs
- Water (hydration is important!)
- Towels
- Wheelchair accessible exercise equipment (e.g., weight training equipment with movable seats)
- Wheelchair accessible restrooms
- Wheelchair accessible locker rooms
 - Is there an available mat in the locker room for dressing, if needed?
 - Is there assistance available for dressing or undressing?
- Wheelchair accessible showers
- Grab bars in restrooms and showers
- Clean and well-maintained facilities
- Handicap parking
- Distance from parking to facility entrance
- Ramp – entry in/out of building
- Working elevators if multiple floors
- Is the facility near your home? You are more likely to go exercise if the location is convenient.
- What are the open hours? Some facilities are open 24 hours, while others have limited hours? When is the facility busiest?
- Are participants required to have medical clearance or a health history?
- Can you take a tour?
- Accommodate people with hemiplegia, paraplegia, tetraplegia: Do you have equipment to adapt exercise equipment as needed for limitations in hand or leg function, such as adaptive gloves or ace wraps.
- Other:

Staff Background and Training

Who is available onsite to assist an individual with a neurologic condition?

- Personal trainer with or without certification, such as:
 - Certified Inclusive Fitness Trainers (CIFT):
 - <https://certification.acsm.org/acsm-inclusive-fitness-trainer>
 - <http://certification2.acsm.org/profinder? ga=2.254101768.1286397395.1495148201-581199747.1495147925>
 - Certified Special Populations Specialist (CSPS):
 - <https://www.nasca.com/Certification/CSPS/>
- Athletic Trainer (ATC)
- Exercise Physiologist
- Physical Therapist (PT)
- Occupational Therapist (OT)
- Pre-PT/OT or PT/OT students
- Nutritionist or dietitian
- Pilates or other specialized training
- Other _____

What training does the staff have?

- Does the center have you fill out a health questionnaire to determine your risk factors and the most suitable activities to meet your needs and interests?
- How does the facility handle emergency situations? Has staff been trained in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and first aid?
- If the staff are not licensed in the area of working with people with neurologic conditions (e.g., are not PTs or OTs), are they trained to:
 - Work with people with disabilities (such as with Certified Inclusive Fitness Trainers)
 - Work with individuals with SCI, CVA, PD, MS etc.
 - Pass competencies to be able to work with individuals with neurologic dysfunction

 - Monitor blood pressure and/or heart rate
 - Monitor pulse oximetry/oxygen levels
 - Recognize and address orthostatic hypotension (low pressure upon standing) and severe hypertension in any position (autonomic dysreflexia)

 - Implement an exercise prescription
 - Appropriately progress exercises or decrease frequency/intensity when Needed
 - Perform skin checks after exercise, when appropriate

Extent of assistance

- One-time tour of facility
- One-time orientation to equipment
- One-on-one personal trainer

- One trainer for ____ (number of people)
- Group workouts or classes? (what type?)
- Monitor every session, weekly, monthly
- Assist with set-up on each piece of equipment
- Assist with transfers on/off equipment
- If no assistance...
 - Can a family member, or personal assistant attend to help me?
 - Can the above individual also exercise? If so, what is the cost?

List the equipment that is available at your facility. *(While having all of the “latest and greatest” equipment available may not be needed to obtain your personal goals, you will want to find out if equipment that you need is available).*

- Automated External Defibrillator (AED)
- Weight-training equipment (chest press, biceps curls, triceps, etc.)
 - With or without ability to move seat out of the way for wheelchair access
- Free weights
- Elastic bands or tubing
- Arm ergometers /arm bikes
- Recumbent bikes/ bikes with a seat that have a back rest
- Inclined plane bodyweight devices
- Standing frames
- Treadmills
 - With or without overhead harness system or other support system for safety and/or body weight support during training
- Overhead harness suspension systems
- Sturdy rolling walkers [Second Step, Rifton Pacer (adult, and tall/heavy duty), platform walkers, etc.]
- Parallel bars
- Pool
 - Lift for entry/exit
 - Ramp for entry/exit
- Underwater treadmill
- Equipment for balance training (foam, Swiss balls, bolsters, etc.)
- Pedometers and/or accelerometers
- Slings with overhead suspension
- Functional electric stimulation (FES) cycling
- Electric stimulation for individual muscles
- Whole body vibration
- Robotic or powered exoskeletons

Finances

- Approximate cost _____ (per session, per week, per month, annual)
- Private pay or accept any insurances
- Scholarships
- Reduced rates for fitness centers that have equipment with limited access for individuals with disabilities
- Can I obtain a temporary pass for a small daily fee or at no cost to try out the facility?

Communication with Healthcare Providers

Open communication amongst your team is critical for developing, implementing and progressing your training program in a way that is safe and effective. Questions to ask a post-rehabilitation program or provider include:

- Is the program or provider willing to communicate with your rehabilitation team or PT?
- How will they communicate with your rehabilitation team or PT?
 - One or more meetings face-to-face with therapist for communication and training
 - Email
 - Phone
 - Other: _____
- When will they communicate with your rehabilitation team or PT?
 - To alert therapists of potential or actual medical status changes (e.g., fractures, major illness) and seek input for appropriate physical activity modifications
 - To seek assistance of therapist if need to update program
 - To alert therapist to when a patient increases or decrease function to the point of need of re-entry into therapy
 - At regularly scheduled intervals
 - Other: _____

Other Resources to Consider: Choosing a Fitness Center from National Center on Health, Physical Activity and Disability (NCHPAD):

<http://www.nchpad.org/308/1909/Choosing~a~Fitness~Center>