

Rehab Centers get their own doctoring

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News Editor

The 2nd floor rehab center at the Beartooth Billings Clinic (BBC) in Red Lodge and the Joliet Physical Therapy Clinic both have a spring in their steps as a result of being the recipients of last year's Beartooth Ball that raised \$165,000 for the departments.

The Ball focused on raising awareness and support for the Acute Care and Rehab Teams. With the proceeds the Red Lodge team was able to purchase over 13 major pieces of equipment to help with people's therapeutic and physical needs while Joliet's rehab clinic at the Community Center, received 8 new items.

Kyle Archbold, BBC Therapy Manager, who has been in healthcare for 20 years, knows something about the "heartache" when it comes to purchasing new equipment.

"Life in the Rehab Center has changed immensely," said Archbold.

"It is truly amazing to see how this community came together for the rehabilitation services at last year's ball. The funds raised have led to a state-of-the-art facility that would rival much larger metropolitan therapy centers in much larger cities," said Archbold. "You cannot put a price tag on reassurance that you or your loved one are getting the best possible care."

"Coupling the new equipment with what I feel to be the best therapy team in the state of Montana is nothing but a win-win for the community of Red Lodge as a whole as well as the Beartooth therapy department," he said. "Thank you to all the gracious donors."

Amy Hummel, Physical Therapy Manager in Joliet, added she appreciated the donors and the community in supporting "our ability to improve our healthcare for our patients."

The new equipment purchased includes an E Pacer that helps people suffering from a stroke or from an accident with their mobility with its sit-to-stand lift functionality; a Vestibular First machine that connects to a computer to help with disorders of vestibular function particularly that of the inner ear, or more generally to the sense of balance.

Next up is a motorized set of parallel bars that can be adjusted to suit the patients walking rehabilitation needs

be it a ramp or a set of stairs.

"Before this we had to take people outside in all weathers to do ramp training, and the stairs we have are not enough," said Carole Haines, Physical Therapy Assistant. "We use this a lot as people are nervous about stairs. This way we can introduce this to them really gradually, altering the slope incrementally, 2 inches then more. We adjust to what they need and more specifically to how their home is and have them conquer their fear."

A Torque Tank, known affectionally as "Frank the Tank" looks intimidating but is used by a lot of elderly men and women. It is a full body device with resistance levels that allow the patient to either push or pull it and thereby helping their muscles and inner core strength.

Further new pieces include a Hip Abductor machine for hip strength; a True Stretch Machine, that helps with flexibility training in a self contained stretching area; a wider based Mat Table, allowing for more movement, rolls and stretching; new weighted bars for upper body strength and resistance bands and a Rogue squat rack, a multi-functioning gym, that can be utilized by high level athletes and elderly people.

"It makes you have more confidence, it's like they are not in a rehab center but a gym," explained Haines.

Other purchases include a Shuttle Recovery unit to help patients regain lower body strength; Fit Index Foam roller, a tissue mobilization device, a Therapy Gun for local percussive massage therapy; Balance training mats that simulates uneven sidewalks; Mini hurdles for agility training, balance, rehabbing a joint or for neuro; and a PTS Personalized Tourniquet System for BFR for aftercare and to help a patient unable to lift loads and once applied to a limb during low intensity exercise this has been shown to increase muscle size and strength across different age groups.

Joliet received a Shuttle Recovery for LE strengthening/sport recovery needs, NuStep cardiovascular equipment, new dumb bell set, parallel bars, anatomy models for patient education, weighted resistance bars for strengthening, and other small equipment to address balance or soft tissue mobilization needs. The



Sarah Pedone PT, Joliet Physical Therapy Rehabilitation, helps a patient using the Torque Tank.

clinic also received the Prometheus Group Biofeedback Machine.

"This particular equipment allows for the use of visual and auditory feedback to assist patients in contracting as well as isolating certain muscles with the use of electrodes. It also serves as an electrical stimulation unit. The Biofeedback machine is a huge asset to further developing our pelvic floor rehabilitation program and serves as another helpful "tool" to help patients reach recovery faster. I am quite excited to use it," said Hummel.



Carole Haines, Physical Therapy Assistant, explains how the motorized set of parallel bars works.

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The new equipment has changed the landscape of these departments.

Jode Moncur, Physical Therapist II, said the updated equipment has transformed therapy significantly beyond where it was.

“In particular, the E Pacer body weight support system has allowed a variety of patients to comfortably and safely work on standing and walking recovery. Reducing fear of falling improves a patient’s confidence and encourages a more challenging treatment plan. It

also has reduced the risk of work related injury to the therapists. All the equipment is a valuable asset to the rehabilitation department, hospital and community.”

Physical Therapist, Tony Christensen, added the new equipment has made it more exciting for patients to experience PT.

“We have more options in how to work with people and much of it is more functionally based. Having a free weight system has allowed us to work with high school athletes more effectively and is more in line with their performance training,” he said.

“The new equipment has transformed our rehab gym into a more modern space that is exciting for patients’ and for the rehab staff as well,” said Haines. “I have especially enjoyed challenging patients with our torque tank sled. This enables us to focus on a full body functional strength training with clients who are rehabilitating from total joint replacements as well as for those needing neuro-rehabilitation after a stroke. I have been pleasantly surprised that this has been a piece of equipment that the younger and older generations are benefitting from.

I have also really loved

the addition of the motorized parallel bars. They allow us to quickly raise and lower the degree of the ramp slope and the height of the stairs to help patient’s safely tackle these challenging obstacles.”

“Coming through the Pandemic it was hard, this has been a morale booster,” added Haines. “So many fun things.”



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