



Thinking Outside the “Box-step”

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Patients with stairs pose a major discharge challenge

Stair training is often a deal breaker when it comes to discharge planning. Many of our patients are on fixed incomes, have little to no outside help/support to move to a different location even if they have the finances to support that, or just simply are unable to move to another residence. One of our amazing therapist (Kelli Shoemaker, PTA) came up with a fantastic and highly creative method to allow two patients in this situation to return home where otherwise they may have had to remain here indefinitely.

Stair training using a box-step

Mr. John Fisher and Daryl Parrot (both who consented to this presentation) had medical issues that made stair training nearly impossible for them to accomplish. John had a recent L BKA and B rotator cuff injuries. He had 5 steps to enter his home. Building a ramp was not feasible due to financial burden and spatial limitations. Daryl had R post polio and a recent Left Hip fracture. He had 13 steps to get into his home. He also had upper extremity pain which made conventional stair training very challenging. Both could perform sit to stands. Kelli had the bright idea to use a box-step to allow them to safely ascend and descend stairs.

Here is how it works

First, at the bottom of the stairs, the patient performs a sit to stand transfer. An 8” box step turned on its side (this equates to 20”) is then placed on the step going up, The patient turns and sits down on the box, moves their feet up to the next step and stands up again. Going down, the patient places their feet on the descending step while sitting and then stands up. The box is placed on that step and the patient sits down. This is repeated until the bottom.

Two complete success stories

We completed care giver training for both John and Daryl’s families using this technique with great return demonstration. At present both of these gentlemen are thriving and are still able to ascend and descend their stairs with ease. My most sincere wish is that this presentation will be able to help many others just like them to return to community living.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank, of course, Kelli ,for this amazing idea. Additionally, I would like to pass on my thanks to each and every department here at Beacon Hill. We truly live CAPLICO each and every day. It is because of this that we are able to have such a meaningful impact on our community.

