Center for Pediatric Rehabilitation
at Gillette Children’s Specialty Healthcare
Centers of Excellence at Gillette Children’s Specialty Healthcare

Treating people who have disabilities and complex medical conditions requires a team approach. At Gillette, our doctors, surgeons, nurses, therapists, orthotists, psychologists, social workers and other specialists work together to care for patients. Throughout our centers of excellence, we offer leading-edge medical treatments tailored to the unique needs of each patient.

Gillette’s centers of excellence:

■ Center for Cerebral Palsy
■ Center for Craniofacial Services
■ Center for Gait and Motion Analysis
■ Center for Pediatric Neurosciences
■ Center for Pediatric Orthopaedics
■ Center for Pediatric Rehabilitation
■ Center for Pediatric Rheumatology
■ Center for Spina Bifida

Cover photo: Zoey, who had a hemispherectomy to control seizures, works on improving her speech and language skills with Susan Ellerbusch Toavs (right), a speech and language pathologist. Jennifer Lehman, a rehabilitation nurse, will help Zoey practice the skills she learns in therapy.
Center for Pediatric Rehabilitation

The Center for Pediatric Rehabilitation at Gillette Children’s Specialty Healthcare is the region’s largest center for children who need comprehensive rehabilitation services. We began providing care for children and teens with brain injuries in 1979. Until then, children with brain injuries often received care in settings designed for adults.

Gillette’s program recognized that children and teens who sustain such injuries have needs that are different from those of adults with similar conditions. Our brain-injury program soon became known for its innovative approach and positive outcomes. We then opened the program to patients with spinal cord injuries and other comprehensive rehabilitation needs. Our services are available under one roof, giving families unparalleled access to comprehensive care during their rehabilitation stays.

Today our center is one of only three pediatric, family-centered facilities in the five-state area accredited by the Commission for Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF). To receive CARF accreditation, rehabilitation programs must meet internationally recognized standards for care and service. A pediatric family-centered rehabilitation program must meet more than 40 additional standards that focus on the role and involvement of families in rehabilitation.
Logan focuses on improving his balance with the help of Patty Malone, a physical therapist. Following a traumatic brain injury, Logan received specialized services that helped him return to his home and community.
Areas of Care

We offer comprehensive medical rehabilitation services to children who have brain injuries, spinal cord injuries and complex medical conditions. Because such situations affect the whole family, we also offer services to address the physical, emotional and social needs of parents and siblings. Our expert medical care helps patients maximize their abilities and return to their homes, schools and communities.

Brain Injuries

Brain injuries can result from trauma, infection, tumors or a lack of oxygen to the brain. Regardless of the cause, a brain injury can lead to physical, cognitive and behavioral changes. Many problems surface shortly after an injury occurs. Because children are continually developing, some deficits might be immediately apparent, but other issues might not be evident for months or even years.

At Gillette, we’ve designed our brain-injury program for children and teens. We provide an intensive medical, nursing and rehabilitation program that includes acute care, therapy and family support. We accept children and teens with mild to severe brain injuries, including patients who depend on ventilators, patients with tracheostomies and children who require tube feeding.

Spinal Cord Injuries

Spinal cord injuries can result from trauma, tumors or infections. The injuries often affect sensation and motor control. For decades, Gillette has provided comprehensive inpatient therapy to help patients with spinal cord injuries become as independent as possible. As appropriate, we offer adaptive equipment, such as braces, walkers and wheelchairs.

Comprehensive Medical Rehabilitation

Some children who have complex medical issues need more intensive rehabilitation services than they could receive as outpatients. We offer comprehensive medical rehabilitation to children who have injuries, burns or amputations. We also see children who’ve had extensive orthopaedic surgery or neurosurgical procedures, such as hemispherectomies or brain tumor resection. Children with neurological conditions such as Guillain-Barre syndrome or encephalitis also benefit from our program.
Our Team Approach

At Gillette’s Center for Pediatric Rehabilitation, our program focuses on families. During an inpatient stay, we include parents in planning treatments, communicating progress, and preparing patients for discharge.

Family-Focused Care

We develop personalized care plans for patients as soon as they’re admitted to Gillette. Throughout the inpatient stay, care teams — led by pediatric rehabilitation medicine physicians — meet regularly to discuss a child’s progress and update care plans. Our inpatient rehabilitation coordinators help families understand the rehabilitation process, care plans and services available at Gillette. Whenever possible, they offer tours before admission to acquaint families with the rehabilitation environment.

Our goal is to help children return to homes, schools and communities as soon as possible. To that end, we begin discharge planning early during an inpatient stay. Families sometimes need help arranging for special equipment, home modifications, school services and outpatient therapy. Before discharge, our social workers meet regularly with patients and families to provide resources, information and support. They also help families locate and coordinate community resources. Physical and occupational therapists help families with their needs for mobility, adaptive, and daily-living equipment. Our psychologists serve as school liaisons and help children return to school.
Acute Care

Following brain or spinal cord injuries, many patients spend time in Gillette’s pediatric intensive care unit (PICU). Our pediatric rehabilitation medicine physicians provide consultations while children are receiving acute care. Some patients require immediate surgery. Others need medical treatment for secondary injuries. Our pediatric intensivists and nurses specialize in caring for critically ill and injured children and teens.

Our respiratory care practitioners monitor and treat children to ensure respiratory health. In addition to providing care for patients who need help breathing, our practitioners teach families how to use and care for respiratory equipment.

We begin providing comprehensive rehabilitative therapy services soon after patients arrive in our PICU. Working with children early in their recovery helps keep patients’ bodies as healthy as possible, prevent complications, and allow patients to maintain or regain abilities. In addition, we support families with psychology, social-work and child life services.
Gianna sustained a spinal cord injury while sledding and was admitted to the Center for Pediatric Rehabilitation. After discharge, she received physical therapy as an outpatient. Working on seated push-ups with Amy Schulz, a physical therapist, improves Gianna’s ability to propel her wheelchair and helps prevent pressure sores.
Inpatient Rehabilitation

Children and teenagers come to the Center for Pediatric Rehabilitation inpatient unit from the Gillette PICU and other hospitals and acute-care facilities. We admit patients when they’re medically stable and can participate in a multidisciplinary rehabilitation program. Rehabilitation is very different from acute care. While working on immediate medical concerns, rehabilitation emphasizes long-term changes in patient abilities and function.

Our rehabilitation specialists help children increase their strength and flexibility and learn new skills to make up for those that were lost due to illness or injury. Specialized rehabilitation is a critical step toward helping children maximize their abilities.

Throughout the hospital stay, our pediatric rehabilitation medicine physicians direct rehabilitative care plans. Children requiring additional medical care might see our neurosurgeons, neurologists, orthopaedists or otolaryngologists.

Rehabilitation nurses provide support and daily care, helping children adjust to their changed circumstances and practice skills learned in therapy. Our nurses also educate patients and families about medical procedures and self-care.

Whether a patient eats by mouth or requires tube feedings, dietitians meet with patients to make recommendations about nutritional needs. Dieticians also educate patients and families about how nutrition supports healing.

Day-to-Day Therapy

As much as possible, we try to make each day in rehabilitation similar to the routine of daily life. When they’re able, children will get up, dress, eat meals in the common room, and attend therapies and school. Typically, inpatients participate in physical, occupational, and/or speech and language therapy every day.

Physical therapists help children improve their strength, coordination and balance so they can move and function independently. Occupational therapists help children develop and improve independent-living skills and fine-motor abilities (e.g., arm and hand movements). For example, patients might relearn to dress, feed and groom themselves. Our occupational therapists work on visual-motor, visual-perceptual and cognitive skills. Our team also evaluates adaptive equipment needs and teaches children how to use assistive technology, such as wheelchairs, computers and environmental controls.
Some children need therapy to improve cognitive skills, speech production, and language comprehension and expression. Our speech and language pathologists assess, diagnose and treat such children. In addition, our specialists help children who have problems related to feeding, swallowing and communication.

Our assistive-technology specialists design and fabricate custom orthoses (braces), seating systems and adaptive equipment. Our specialists modify computers and communication devices, making the equipment accessible to people with impaired motor abilities.

As patients make progress, they meet with our therapeutic recreation specialists, who assess their capabilities and needs and help them develop social and leisure skills. To help patients re-enter their communities, our team also educates patients about adaptive sports and recreational opportunities and provides opportunities to practice re-entry skills. For example, an inpatient who’s working on balance and coordination might practice carrying a meal tray in the hospital cafeteria.

Support for Children and Families

When children and teens experience serious injuries or chronic conditions, they often need help adjusting to their circumstances. During the hospital stay, Child and Family Services staff members help with children’s academic, cognitive, social and emotional needs. Our staff also help meet the social and emotional needs of families.

Child life specialists help patients (age 17 and under) understand and cope with a medical environment. Using age-appropriate activities and presurgical tours, our team prepares children and their parents for routine medical procedures. Our specialists also meet with siblings, to address their questions and concerns, and involve patients and siblings in activities that support their growth and development.

Our psychologists screen patients to evaluate their cognitive, academic and psychosocial abilities. Psychologists talk with patients and families about the effects of a disability and help children cope with pain and stress. Our specialists also contact patients’ schools to discuss special academic services or behavior-management strategies.
Following illness or injury, some children need additional support. Our pediatric psychiatrists treat mood and behavior disorders in children and teens. In some instances, psychologists might suggest medication, psychotherapy and family counseling. Our pediatric neuropsychologists focus on the special needs of children who have neurological conditions. Our specialists often see children who’ve experienced brain injuries or uncontrolled seizures. Neuropsychologists also see patients who have difficulty with organizing, planning or impulse control. By understanding how the brain affects behavior and learning, our specialists help improve family interactions and school performance.

Our chaplains provide patients and families with pastoral care, spiritual guidance and religious resources, regardless of their religious affiliation.

Our inpatients receive in-hospital school services, thanks to a partnership between Gillette and the St. Paul Public Schools. Certified public schoolteachers work with community schools to customize curricula for each patient. Our psychologists assess inpatients’ cognitive abilities, academic needs and emotional capacities. Our staff also keep children’s schools apprised of their status.

Our Family Resource Center has an extensive library of books, magazines, publications, videos and computers with Internet access. Gillette also offers wireless service. Patients and families use these resources to locate medical information, support groups, and advocacy organizations that focus on specific medical conditions.
Outpatient and Transition Services

Following discharge, patients often return to Gillette for assistive-technology services, medical care and surgery. Outpatients also might receive psychology, social-work and therapy services. Our outpatient care coordinators help patients and families navigate and understand health-care systems at Gillette and within their communities. Our team also helps families coordinate multiple appointments with Gillette health-care providers.

Many children and teens require lifelong management and care. As teenagers approach adulthood, Gillette helps them begin the transition from pediatric to adult-focused health care. Our transition staff helps children and teens learn more about adult health care, independent living, careers, education, and financial and supportive resources.

After a spinal cord injury, Josh learned about adapted sports from Gillette’s therapeutic recreation specialists. Today, Josh is a mono skier, a two-time participant in the National Junior Disability track and field championships, and a member of the Junior Rolling Timberwolves varsity basketball team.
Our rehabilitation team includes the following medical specialists.

**Pediatric Rehabilitation Medicine Physicians**
Our pediatric rehabilitation medicine physicians focus on the complex medical and rehabilitative needs of our patients. By providing consultations while children are receiving acute care, our specialists strive to prevent complications and help patients regain abilities. Our doctors also:

- Evaluate and treat spasticity
- Collaborate with primary-care physicians and consultants to assess and manage patients’ rehabilitation needs
- Direct inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation care plans
- Prescribe therapies
- Prescribe orthoses (braces and splints), wheelchairs and adaptive equipment
- Direct and manage medical care of rehabilitation inpatients

**Otolaryngologists**
Otolaryngologists are also known as ear, nose and throat (ENT) specialists. They assess and treat problems associated with procedures, such as tracheostomies and long-term oral intubations, that open the airways.

**Pediatricians**
Specialty pediatricians and pediatric nurse practitioners help patients with general medical concerns, such as nutrition and bowel management. Our doctors evaluate and treat children who have developmental issues.

**Pediatric Intensivists**
Pediatric intensivists specialize in caring for critically ill and injured children and teens. Our team cares for patients in Gillette’s PICU 24 hours a day.

**Orthopaedic Surgeons**
Our orthopaedic surgeons monitor patients’ bones, muscles and joints. When problems occur, our doctors offer treatments such as bracing and surgery.

**Hospitalists**
Our hospitalists are pediatricians who provide inpatient care when a medical team requests a consultation regarding fevers, bowel and bladder management, pain, or nutrition. Once consulted, hospitalists manage an inpatient’s medical team and oversee patient care 24 hours a day.

**Neurologists**
Pediatric neurologists specialize in evaluating, diagnosing and treating children and teens who experience seizures and other nervous-system disorders.

**Neurosurgeons**
Neurosurgeons specialize in surgically treating nervous-system injuries and disorders.
Our rehabilitation team includes the following clinical specialists:

- Rehabilitation Nurses
- Inpatient Rehabilitation Coordinators
- Outpatient Care Coordinators
- Physical Therapists
- Occupational Therapists
- Speech and Language Pathologists
- Assistive-Technology Specialists
- Respiratory Therapists
- Social Workers
- Psychiatrists
- Psychologists
- Pediatric Neuropsychologists
- Child Life Specialists
- Therapeutic Recreation Specialists
- Family Resource Center Staff
- Chaplains
- Dieticians
- Certified Schoolteachers

All of our rehabilitation nurses have advanced, acute-care skills. More than half of our rehabilitation nurses are accredited through the Association of Rehabilitation Nurses.

Making a Referral

Gillette accepts children and teens into our inpatient rehabilitation unit from a community hospital or PICU. Our on-site PICU is readily available if children should require intensive care during a Gillette stay. We accept children who are still unconscious, as well as those who have feeding tubes, tracheostomies or ventilators.

For information about Gillette’s Center for Pediatric Rehabilitation, call 651-229-3915 or 800-719-4040 (toll-free).

To refer a patient, call our inpatient rehabilitation coordinator at 651-229-3877.
Our Mission

Gillette meets the special health-care needs of people — primarily children and teens — who have disabilities. Our mission is to help those we serve realize greater well-being, independence and enjoyment in life.

We combine medical, nursing, therapeutic, technical, psychosocial and other expertise in family-centered programs. We provide services at our clinics, in our hospital and throughout the region, in response to community needs and often in collaboration with other organizations. We seek to build community partnerships that help continue our mission and enhance care for people who have disabilities.