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Measuring the impact of a stroke recovery program integrating modified cardiac rehabilitation on all-cause mortality, cardiovascular performance and functional performance

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The Stroke Recovery Program (SRP) is an innovative program that follows patients through the continuum of their recovery after stroke. Recognizing similar risk factors as patients with cardiac disease, the Stroke Recovery Program expands the Cardiac Rehabilitation (CR) model to benefit stroke survivors. The outpatient based program consists of: physical medicine and rehabilitation physician visits, interval cardiovascular conditioning (modified CR), risk factor management, nutritional education and psychological support. Current research studies compare outcomes for two groups, where Non-participants (standard of care receiving traditional outpatient rehabilitation) are compared to SRP-participants. During a prospective cohort study, stroke survivors were discharged from an inpatient rehabilitation facility to an outpatient setting. 136 SRP-participants received the SRP, while 473 Non-participants chose standard of care rehabilitation. The SRP demonstrated: 1) excellent safety, 2) markedly low 1-year post-stroke mortality from hospital admission (1.47%) compared to the United States national rate of 31%, 3) improved cardiovascular-performance over 36 sessions (103% increase in Metabolic Equivalent of Tasks times minutes), and 4) improved function in Activity Measure of Post-Acute Care (AM-PAC)TM domains ($P < 0.001$) in a feasibility study. An additional subgroup analysis showed the SRP to: 1) positively impact mortality; non-participants had a 9.09 times higher hazard of mortality ($P = 0.039$), and 2) improve function in AM-PACTM domains ($P < 0.001$). Stroke survivors receiving a Stroke Recovery Program may potentially benefit from reductions in all-cause mortality, and improvements in cardiovascular-performance and function. Ongoing studies continue to compare the impact of the SRP on hospital readmissions and the incidence of new stroke.

Biography

Dr. Talya Fleming is the Medical Director of the Stroke Recovery Program at JFK Johnson Rehabilitation Institute, in the United States of America. Interested in the role of exercise and disability, she presents her clinical research nationally and internationally on the topics of stroke rehabilitation and neurorehabilitation. Dr. Fleming earned her medical degree from Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, completed residency training at JFK Johnson Rehabilitation Institute and has advanced certification in Brain Injury Medicine. She is an Assistant Professor at Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School and at Hackensack Meridian School of Medicine.

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