



Rehabilitation Institute of Washington PLLC


# Rehab Newsletter

## We're Not Just Intensive Rehab


Although RIW is well known for our intensive Pain Management and Brain Injury Rehabilitation Programs, we also offer a variety of other services to address a patient's individual needs. Due to their specialization in pain management and neurorehabilitation, RIW's team of providers have unique expertise in rehabilitation to support a patient's continued recovery. RIW has the ability to block scheduling to provide back to back services and reduce the impact of therapies on a patient's schedule. Scheduling services under one roof also allows for an open line of communication between providers and supports continuity of care.

If you are interested in exploring rehabilitation options, contact our Program Coordinator, David Kidder, at (206) 859-5036.

## Psychotherapy and Behavioral Health Intervention

 RIW has a clinical psychologist, a neuropsychologist, and a mental health therapist to provide a variety of services to treat mood disorders, support mental health, and provide counseling to support re-engagement in previous life roles. RIW's providers teach cognitive and behavioral coping strategies for managing fear, depression, anger and other emotional consequences following an injury. They can help patients understand their symptom experience and how it can be influenced by psychosocial factors. Whether a patient is dealing with chronic pain, lifestyle changes due to an injury, or is experiencing unfamiliar mood changes following a concussion, RIW's providers have a comprehensive approach to support a patient's progress.

## Work Rehabilitation Program

 RIW is an L&I approved clinic that provides work conditioning and work hardening, now referred to as work rehab programs/WRP. A **work conditioning program** consists of PT and OT to get a worker back to light levels with basic work simulations 2-4 hours/day 3-5 times a week. A **work hardening program** consists of PT and OT and perhaps other disciplines (for example psychology) to get a worker back to medium to heavy work levels with more advanced and specific job simulations. See [page 4](#) for more details.

## Referrals Are Even Easier!

RIW now has a fillable form available for referrals. You can type it up, print it, sign it, and then fax it. No more need to fill out by hand.

You can find the new form [here](#).

As always, if you have questions about the referral process in relation to any of our services, you can contact RIW's patient coordinator, David Kidder at (206) 859-5036



## Services we offer:

- Comprehensive Brain Injury Rehabilitation Program
- Comprehensive Pain Management Program
- Comprehensive Concussion Care
- Concussion evaluation and rehabilitation
- Work Rehabilitation
- Occupational medicine
- Physiatry Evaluation
- Occupational Therapy, Speech Therapy, Physical Therapy

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## Patient Testimonials



My experiences here at RIW in the SIMP program have been monumentally life changing. By obtaining an understanding of persistent pain, along with the additional therapies such as physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech, and educational classes, I have begun to achieve the initial goal I set for this program...getting my life back. Being in an environment where you feel safe and supported allows you the opportunity to progress at your pace, and ALL of the staff, from the ladies at the front desk to the therapists and people you pass in the hall, provide encouragement for your growth process. Having additional access to a highly trained medical team is also an advantage over the “normal” treatment options outside of this unique clinic.

**—Victoria**

**“The beauty of RIW is the integrated team approach in treatment.”**

**— Cindy**

I have never felt that I was just a number here. I have received targeted therapies coming from different disciplines. The beauty of RIW is the integrated team approach in treatment. I feel like I have a very supportive little village of amazing people around me, all working as a vital team member, to help me recover as much as possible from my TBI. — Cindy



### **Make a Referral!**

If you have a patient you would like to refer to one of our programs or providers, please print out and complete our [Referral Form](#) and return it to us along with medical records or other appropriate documentation. You may fax it to (206) 859-5031 or mail it to our clinic address.

# *The Importance of Spatial Awareness when Addressing Visual-Vestibular Impairments Following a Brain Injury*

-A Summary by Barb Mierzwa



I attended a virtual course through the Brain Injury Association of America, *The Importance of Spatial Awareness when Addressing Visual-Vestibular Impairments Following a Brain Injury* on November 2, 2023, by Amy Berryman, OTR and Karen Rasavage, OTR. They discussed the role of vision and vestibular sensory system in spatial awareness. This included four intervention approaches to be used with patients: get comfortable, get grounded, get moving, and get flexible.

As the patient begins to feel comfortable, they focused on settling techniques to allow the nervous system to calm down after an exacerbating incident. These techniques include increasing a patient's base of support such as standing in a corner, lying down, increasing proprioceptive input (i.e. wall sit, press down on head, palming), closing eyes, and working on breathing. The therapists discussed how they use binasal occlusion to assist the brain with inhibition of visual motion in the periphery.

The techniques of getting grounded allows a patient to work on body awareness that may include body scheme, midline orientation, right/left discrimination, and posture. For example, if the therapist wanted the patient to be able to lie down, then they would use weighted blankets, tense-relax mediation, and rolling on a therapy ball. As the patient is able to get grounded it helps connect the body to space and build a foundation for more confident movements.

The therapist could work on movements with the patients such as using the Marsden ball ( we have one in the vision room), progressing eye-head coordination where the eyes are moving and the head is still, then the head moves, and the eyes are still and eventually working on eye and head movements together. By getting a patient moving, it provides dynamic learning opportunities for recalibrating space perception. For a patient to become flexible, it provides symptom-freedom in space. This could include alternating visual input during an activity or challenging another sensorimotor system while performing a visual activity.

— Barb Mierzwa

## RIW Concussion Clinic



**C**oncussions are unfortunately the most common type of traumatic brain injury (TBI). They occur when enough pressure and/or impact is placed on the brain. The term concussion is used interchangeably by health professionals with the term mild TBI, which emphasizes concussions as the mildest form of TBI, and concussions typically do not result in any structural changes to the brain. While it is the mildest form of TBI, it is still an injury that needs to be taken seriously. If neglected and/or treated improperly, patients run the risk of persistent symptoms and/or significantly decreased quality of life.

At the **RIW Concussion Clinic**, we evaluate all potential concussions resultant from sports participation, falls, MVAs, on the job incidents, assaults, and all potential mechanisms for injury. Dr. Ted Albrecht, clinical neuropsychologist, directs a multidisciplinary clinic that evaluates concussion utilizing current state of the art methods, including a comprehensive physical evaluation, neurocognitive testing, and a focused clinical interview, which will review the patient's medical history and current signs/symptoms. Due to the diversity in patients' medical backgrounds and genetic makeup, patients can present with a variety of differing signs and symptoms following concussion. While diverse in presentation, all concussions are treatable if attended to appropriately in clinic.

### **What to expect from my visit**

When you come into clinic, Dr. Albrecht will evaluate your injury, develop a treatment plan, provide appropriate treatment and, if needed, refer you to physical therapy, occupational therapy, cognitive/speech therapy, and/or to a member of our medical team, among others. We will provide treatment monitoring and guidance throughout the entirety of your recovery.

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Criteria for a WRP evaluation include:

1. Referral/agreement by attending provider.
2. Identified return to work goal with job description that describes the physical demands of the job.
3. Worker's diagnosis is a musculoskeletal disorder impacting their ability to return to work full duty.
4. The worker has had at least two months of recovery since their initial injury which may include participation in standard outpatient therapies.

If you have questions contact or would like to make a referral you can contact David Kidder at (206) 859-5036.

# innovation

## Igniting Innovation

Last year, Kaylee Ueland, CCC-SLP attended the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) yearly convention. ASHA is a national professional, scientific, and credentialing association for audiologists; speech language pathologists; speech, language, and hearing scientists; and their assistants. ASHA's theme this year was "Igniting Innovation". Attendees were provided access to an online innovation assessment to discover individual innovation archetypes and specific tactics to realize your potential faster. Individual or team analyses can be completed and compared to worldwide data. The innovation assessment is framed around:

1. Determining your unique strengths and how to accelerate them.
2. Identify your blind spots and where you adversely hinder your creativity.
3. Optimize interactions with your team, boss, and significant other.
4. Compare your skillset to the world's top innovators.
5. Get specific advice about how to realize your potential, faster.

Check it out and discover your innovation archetype! <https://www.innovationassessment.com/>

### Resources

**Retrain Pain** offers a science-based approach to overcoming pain. They provide slideshows in multiple languages to make persistent pain education more accessible.

[retrainpain.org](http://retrainpain.org)

**University of Washington's TBI model systems** offers the latest research and resources on TBI.

<https://tbi.washington.edu/>

**BrainandSpinalCord.org** is a resource for brain and spinal cord injury survivors and their families to learn more about medical conditions, rehabilitation, and legal options.

[BrainandSpinalCord.org](http://BrainandSpinalCord.org)

**Brainline** is a national multimedia project offering information and resources about preventing, treating, and living with TBI. BrainLine includes a series of webcasts, an electronic newsletter, and an extensive outreach campaign.

<https://www.brainline.org/>

**The Washington State Department of Labor & Industries** offers additional information and resources regarding SIMP and Work Hardening programs.

<https://www.lni.wa.gov/>

# Get To Know Us!

## PROGRAMS & SERVICES

The Rehabilitation Institute of Washington, PLLC is a multidisciplinary rehabilitation center for individuals with musculoskeletal injuries, brain injury, acute or chronic (persisting) pain, and functional limitations or disability.

Our experienced team of physicians; psychologists; physical, occupational, and speech therapists; and vocational rehabilitation counselors works with patients to help them return to healthy and functional lifestyles by addressing physical limitations, pain, emotional distress and vocational problems.

### [Structured Intensive Multidisciplinary Program »](#)

The Structured Intensive Multidisciplinary Program is an interdisciplinary rehabilitation program for injured workers and others with persisting low back, neck, shoulder, or other musculoskeletal or neuropathic pain including complex regional pain syndrome (CRPS). The functional restoration program includes medical management, reduction of excessive or harmful medications, comprehensive physical conditioning, psychological and cognitive behavioral therapy for depression or other emotional distress, and vocational counseling. [Read More »](#)

### [Brain Injury Rehabilitation Program »](#)

The Brain Injury Rehabilitation Program is a comprehensive interdisciplinary program for those with post-acute traumatic brain injury or other acquired neurocognitive impairments. The goals of treatment are to improve physical health and fitness, psychological well-being, coping and compensatory strategies, social and leisure activities and capacity for returning to work and/or to other functional activities. [Read More »](#)

### [Work Hardening »](#)

The Work Hardening Program is an intensive, individualized, job specific program of activity for work injuries with the goal of safe return to work. The functional restoration program uses real or simulated work tasks and graded conditioning exercises to improve fitness and tolerance for work. [Read More »](#)

### [Work Conditioning »](#)

The Work Conditioning Program treats disability related to chronic pain. Treatment improves strength, endurance and flexibility and safe body mechanics to safely return to work. [Read More »](#)

### [Concussion Clinic »](#)

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