



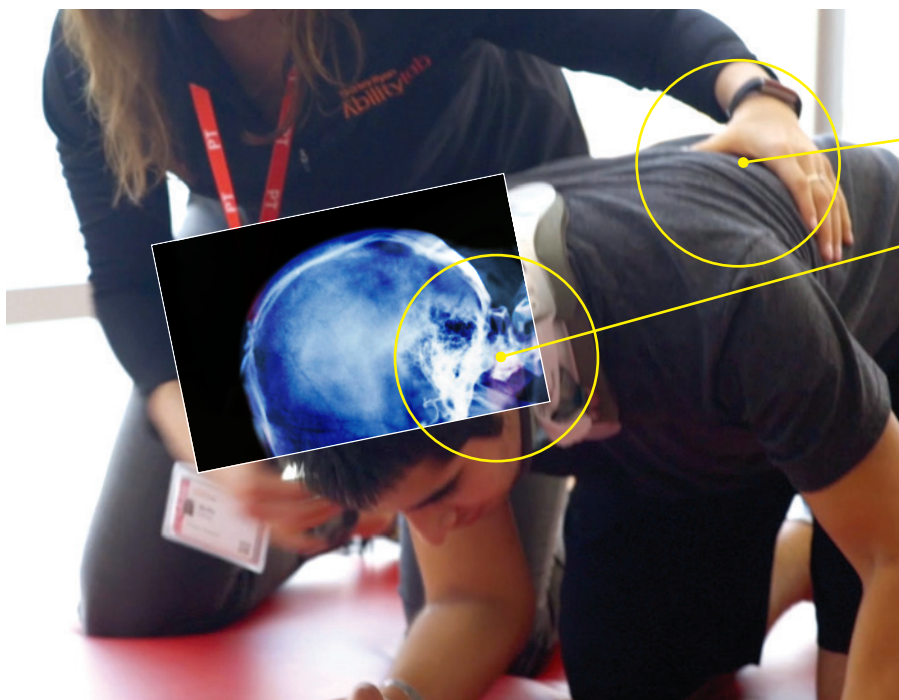
*The leadership team at the Shirley Ryan AbilityLab developed a new patient care model.*

# Driving better outcomes by closely tying patient needs to research

BY **KIMBERLY GEORGE**

*Sr. Healthcare Advisor, Sedgwick*

Advances in technology continue to enhance our lives in countless ways, including our ability to recover from life-changing injuries. Centers of excellence like the Shirley Ryan AbilityLab are perfect examples of the impact technology can have on our health.



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Earlier this year, the Rehab Institute of Chicago was transformed into the Shirley Ryan AbilityLab. In addition to moving to a new, larger facility, the leadership team developed a new patient care model. The Sedgwick team works with centers of excellence like the AbilityLab to bring state of the art solutions to our customers. In May, we had the opportunity to hear more about the new patient care model during an Out Front Ideas panel discussion at the AbilityLab.

Dr. Joanne Smith, President and CEO at the AbilityLab, explained that the vision for this new version of the organization

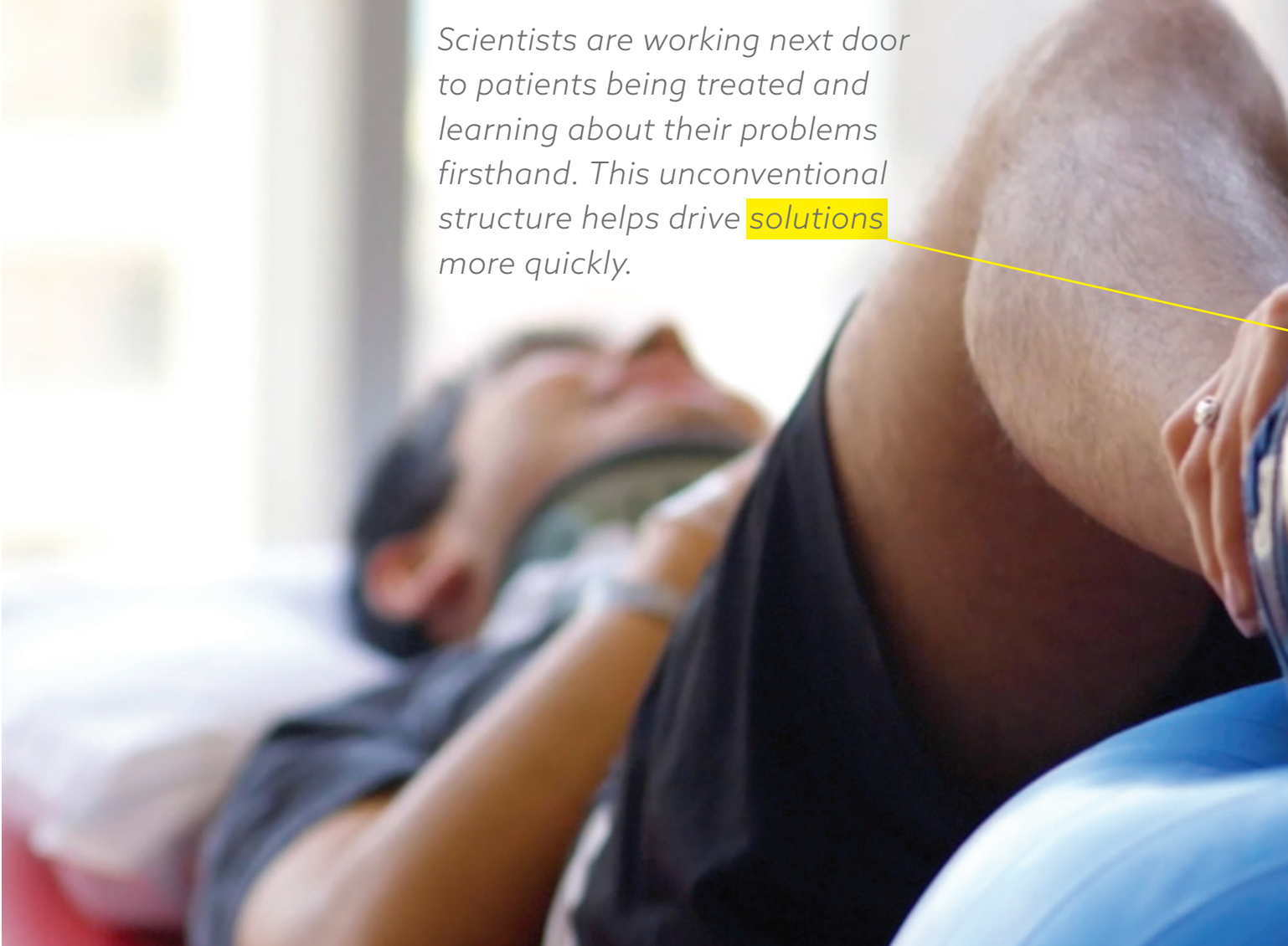
actually came through patients. To continue to enhance the center's services, improve outcomes, and provide room to grow, the staff needed a new building and a new model of care. "We had this engine of clinical care...and we had this engine of research; it became apparent that the hypothesis was – if we put these together and actually embedded the science with the clinical care, could we figure out solutions to patients' problems better and faster?"

At the new facility, scientists are working next door to patients being treated and learning about their problems firsthand. This unconventional structure helps

drive solutions more quickly. The AbilityLab is designed around five key labs to meet the functional needs of the patients. The labs include think and speak, arms and hands, legs and walking, strength and endurance, and pediatrics.

The team at the AbilityLab has developed a data warehouse and an analysis tool to measure changes that reflect low and high levels of progress or no progress. If a patient reaches a certain level, the improvement speeds up, but there are variables that contribute to outcomes. The medical staff knows where the patient is expected to be at certain





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points and they can predict the individual's improvement and function based on the length of the treatment. The AbilityLab has experts in many areas such as the brain, spinal cord, muscles, nerves, bones and cell biology. The team tailors the treatment and care to the individual, putting functionality at the forefront to help patients maximize their abilities.

The AbilityLab also follows patients after they leave and a key part of this is a unique pain management program focused on the whole patient. They put an interdisciplinary team around the patient including researchers, physicians, physical and occupational therapists, and clinicians to assist with pain psychology, vocational rehabilitation and biofeedback.

Some people with chronic pain have had singular interventions that have not been helpful. The AbilityLab's pain management program focuses on cognitive and behavioral treatments and early intervention. Some of their research includes functional MRIs to see what may be changing in the brain to help the patient manage their pain. The AbilityLab's medical team also



gives patients the tools to learn how to manage pain without medication or with reduced medication, and helps improve function and sleep so they can get back to their lives and get back to work.

*The Shirley Ryan AbilityLab was named after the wife of Pat Ryan, founder of AON.*

Sedgwick is committed to providing thought leadership through articles, conferences and educational presentations like the Out Front Ideas series. The two-part articles below appeared in previous issues of Sedgwick's *edge* magazine and focus on how our clinical team works with medical centers of excellence to help injured employees get the right care so they can recover and return to work:

- Right data, right decisions, right results. Edward E. Canavan, AIC, ARM, VP, Workers' Compensation Practice and Compliance / The path to a successful recovery goes beyond treating the injury. Dana Daly, AVP, Managed Care Client Services. *edge* 7. [http://edge.sedgwick.com/issue\\_007/right-data-right-decisions-right-results/](http://edge.sedgwick.com/issue_007/right-data-right-decisions-right-results/)
  - Complex claims: Mobility breakthroughs and impact on productivity. Edward E. Canavan, AIC, ARM, VP, Workers' Compensation Practice and Compliance / Mobility devices can help patients get their lives back. Andrea Buhl, MSN, RN, FNP-BC, SVP, Clinically Integrated Medical Programs. *edge* 4. [http://edge.sedgwick.com/issue\\_004/complex-claims-mobility-breakthroughs-and-impact-on-productivity/](http://edge.sedgwick.com/issue_004/complex-claims-mobility-breakthroughs-and-impact-on-productivity/)
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- Out Front Ideas Live from the Shirley Ryan AbilityLab.



<https://www.safetynational.com/out-front-ideas-live-from-shirley-ryan-ability-lab/>