Rethinking the impossible: Aligning current research, rehabilitation therapies & recovery expectations to create a new post acute standard of care for patients with severe spinal cord injury

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Why aren’t long term post acute outcomes and recovery documented in patients with neurological conditions such as severe spinal cord injury (SCI)? As a healthcare system, how far should we reach in documenting outcomes and recovery and for what length of time so that current knowledge aligns with rehabilitation approaches for mobility recovery? Historically, research for the severe SCI patient population has looked at smaller sample sizes and the patients are less than 1-2 years post injury or diagnosis. In this presentation, we explore what patient reported outcomes can do to shift the conversation around what mobility recovery and targeted rehabilitation therapies in SCI looks like. A key factor in moving the conversation regarding expected outcomes requires a fundamental hypothesis that recovery from severe spinal cord injury is a life-long process. Therefore, with research and data collection at scale (tens of thousand of patients), we can start to tie causation to pieces of recovery and even rehabilitation timelines and therapies that may not have been considered in the past. Case studies will be presented and explores a sample case: a 17 year old sustained an Asia A complete SCI at C6-T5. After nearly 6 years, she learned to walk unassisted. Even after 14 years (she is 31 today), she continues to recover. Collecting and analyzing patient reported outcomes at scale can shed light on long term recovery and what is possible in a population that has historically been given little to no hope in mobility recovery.

Biography
Rebecca B Baker holds two Bachelors degrees: one in Nursing from the University of Tennessee, the Health Science Center in Memphis and one in Education from the University of Memphis. Currently she is completing pre-requisites to pursue a Doctor of Nursing Practice. She serves as the Chief Clinical Officer at Utilize Health, a population health company that specializes in care management services for patients with severe neurological conditions. She is a veteran nurse with over twenty-six years of clinical experience working with patients and care teams in a variety of settings.

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