UPMC-SCI provides a continuum of care beginning with emergency response, continues with comprehensive acute medical treatment and rehabilitation, through utilization of assistive technology services and vocational rehabilitation. UPMC-SCI also contributes to the assessment of long-term outcomes of individuals with spinal cord injury through our enrollment of participants in the National Spinal Cord Injury Database.

UPMC-research, which focuses on assistive technology and the prevention of upper limb pain related to over use, aims to improve the participation and quality of life of individuals with spinal cord injury.

An important factor of recovery and reintegration is support from people who know first hand the challenges faced after a spinal cord injury. The UPMC-SCI also supports the SCI Peer Support Group that meets on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month. A variety of topics are discussed including wheelchair sports, adapting to daily life after injury, and research. Recently recognized by the National Spinal Cord Injury Association (NSCIA). The group started as a small monthly meeting four years ago and has grown to an organization with over 200 members that meets twice a month. Go to [http://www.upmc-sci.pitt.edu/sci-peer](http://www.upmc-sci.pitt.edu/sci-peer) for more details. Or contact Lee Tempest at tempestml@upmc.edu.

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It is estimated that 12,000 people will sustain a spinal cord injury (SCI) each year in the US. There were approximately 273,000 people living with an SCI in the US in 2013.

The Spinal Cord Injury Model Systems (SCIMS) Program was established in 1970 with the goal of creating comprehensive model of care for people with spinal cord injuries.

Currently, there are 14 SCIMS centers. Each center provides a multidisciplinary system of rehabilitation care, participation in a national database, collaborative and site-specific research.

In addition, the centers play a pivotal role in building the national capacity for high-quality treatment and research serving persons with SCI, their families and the communities in which they reside.

Funding is provided by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR), a component of the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS), the main federal agency that supports applied research, training and development to improve the lives of individuals with disabilities. Accomplishing NIDRR's mission is a first step on the journey toward improving the lives of individuals with disabilities. NIDRR staff and its grantees are therefore committed to:

- Generating new knowledge and promoting its effective use in improving the ability of persons with disabilities to perform activities of their choice in the community, and
- Expanding society's capacity to provide full opportunities and accommodations for its citizens with disabilities.

For more information about NIDRR and its programs and research, visit: http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/nidrr/index.html

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