

Mercy rehab team makes it happen REHAB speech

The suddenness and force of a stroke can be overwhelming.

Then comes the hard work of recovery, an often-frustrating adjustment to an altered life.

No one knows that better than Tim Morrissey. The 69-year-old Marion man can't recall many details of the episode last June that changed his life, other than noticing his balance was off.

"The next morning, my daughter called and when I answered the phone, I couldn't speak to her," Morrissey says. "She hung up and called an ambulance."

Morrissey ended up in Mercy's Cardiac-Stroke Center for five days, followed by inpatient rehabilitation. That is where he began picking up the pieces and putting himself back together, with the help of Mercy's inpatient rehab team, made up of therapists, nurses, dietitians, social workers and medical director Dr. Timothy Quinn.



Dr. Tim Quinn
Medical Director

Morrissey's stroke left him with some slurred speech, difficulty swallowing and weakness on his right side. Occupational, physical and speech therapists worked with him throughout each day.

Jill Curry, Morrissey's speech therapist, coached him to slow down and focus his

movements, practicing speech exercises, safe swallowing methods to avoid choking, and strengthening facial and throat muscles affected by the stroke. Morrissey improved significantly over two weeks, she says.

Mercy's new, seventh-floor Inpatient Rehabilitation Center opened June 18; Morrissey was the first patient.

Establishing this center was important, explains Joni Henderson, Mercy's Rehabilitation Program Coordinator. Now, Mercy patients needing

rehabilitation can choose among outpatient or inpatient care, home health care or transitional care, depending on their condition.

Dr. Quinn says, "Our focus is to identify individual patient needs and provide personalized care, with the goal of getting the patient home with an intact quality of life."

Morrissey went home June 27. His granddaughter lives with him, and his daughters are nearby. He still uses the exercises the rehab team taught him. His speech, swallowing and mobility have improved, and he's able to drive and shop for himself.

"I expected to get everything back right away, but it takes much longer to recover than I expected," he says. "You can't prepare yourself for a stroke, really. It can happen to anyone. I'm re-teaching myself everything."

Tim Morrissey, the first patient at Mercy's new Inpatient Rehabilitation Center, works with speech therapist Jill Curry.

"It was intense, but very therapeutic. They did a marvelous job."

Tim Morrissey

