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QUARTERLY

CUSTOMER NEWSLETTER



 **Powerback**
Rehabilitation®

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Rehabilitation *to you*

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Respiratory

Powerback acquires Encore GC Acquisition, LLC

Powerback Rehabilitation has acquired Encore GC Acquisition, LLC and its related business operations, including Encore Rehabilitation, Evergreen Rehabilitation, Encore Preakness, Metro Therapy, and Encore Pediatrics (collectively “Encore”). This strategic move solidifies our commitment to delivering top-tier rehabilitation therapy services and marks an exciting new chapter of growth.

Together, the combined company serves patients of all ages, providing patient-focused, outcomes-driven care that

allows clients to achieve and maintain their highest quality of life.

The acquisition brings together two companies with distinctive and complementary product portfolios, enabling Powerback to broaden our impact and range of offerings. Specifically, Encore’s proven expertise in Pediatric Therapy will serve as a cornerstone for expanding these specialized services into new markets, providing enhanced solutions to a more extensive customer base.

“We are thrilled to welcome Encore, along with its talented leadership, operations, clinical teams, and valued customers, into the Powerback family,” said Carl Shrom, PT, MSPT, Chief Executive Officer at Powerback.

“This acquisition represents a significant milestone for our organization as we set out to combine our strengths and capitalize on each company’s unique resources. Together, we are well-positioned to achieve greater success and positively impact the lives of even more patients.”

Services to Support Your Focus on Employee Health & Safety

Powerback can help you with staff retention through our Health and Safety Program!

In resident care communities, direct-line caregiving staff are the most likely to have injuries involving days away from work. OSHA identified that these injuries are primarily due to repeated manual patient-handling tasks. Our customizable, employee-specific program uses a multifaceted approach to keep staff safe and healthy.

Post-Injury Rehabilitation

Our therapists can provide treatment services onsite in our rehab spaces, or at the employee’s home if needed. Both settings facilitate timely and efficient treatment in the client’s natural home and work environments. This client-focused approach can lead to faster recovery times and a quicker return to work.

Injury Prevention Training

We can provide training for all staff on various injury prevention topics including but not limited to safe resident handling, ergonomics, preventing repetitive use injuries, and safe lifting. All courses can be offered in a multimodal format to include live instruction and learner practice of techniques.

Physical Performance Screening

Powerback staff can complete employee screens that are customized to your distinct job roles. Our screens allow for the early identification of performance or body mechanic issues and allow us to provide proper education and training or recommend task modifications before an injury occurs. These can be completed upon hire, after a prolonged hiatus, or job role change.



The Next Phase of Dysphagia Treatment in SNFs

By Jack Silverstein | June 9, 2023 | Skilled Nursing News

Dysphagia. It's a growing problem in skilled nursing care, and an urgent one, as the condition, in which a person has deep difficulty swallowing, can lead to serious complications including malnutrition, dehydration or even death.

As of 2020, studies showed global rates of dysphagia among nursing home residents as high as 70%. These swallowing problems often arise in older adults following a stroke, Dementia, Alzheimer's or Parkinson's disease, or from injuries to the head or neck after a fall.

Diagnosing swallowing problems and applying therapy can be complicated, but eased with the use of evaluation tools, such as those provided by Powerback Rehabilitation through its program Swallow Solutions.

Usually SNF operators call speech-language pathologists (SLPs) to address swallowing problems. In many cases, SLP-led therapy can successfully teach patients to train the muscles in the throat and mouth to enable them to swallow without issues.

But the right tools can make the difference.

Swallow Solutions has proven effective in allowing SLPs to examine patients using endoscopes — a small tube with an attached camera inserted through the patient's nose. This process, called flexible endoscopic evaluation of swallowing (FEES), allows the SLP to peek inside the upper respiratory tract for a correct diagnostic and a therapy

plan.

Powerback uses endoscopes developed by PatCom Medical Inc. The company has seen success with Swallow Solutions in the pilot stage, introducing FEES as a demonstration project in Albuquerque, NM. In the first 235 procedures under this pilot program, 66% of exams resulted in patients receiving immediate changes in diet recommendation, and 94% resulted in identification for further skilled intervention through accurate and thorough diagnostics from the FEES procedure.

Today, the Swallow Solutions' FEES service has expanded to many of Powerback's contract locations across 17 states, helping more than 30 Powerback speech-language pathologists to be trained in this procedure and receive the necessary state-of-the-art devices.

"The aspect I love most is seeing how empowered our own SLPs feel having this clinical tool as part of their practice," says David Gerst, Senior Clinical Director and FEES lead at Powerback. "It is uplifting to hear the amazing stories they share of the impact they are making with their patients."

What SNFs need with regards to speech therapy

Because dysphagia can impact health outcomes and patient care in the skilled nursing setting if left untreated, diagnostic and therapy tools such as those provided by Powerback are essential, especially in the post-pandemic era.

"One large lesson the pandemic taught us was the need to enhance access

to patient care," Gerst says. "When we review the literature, the need for instrumental assessment is paramount to treating patients with dysphagia in any environment. Powerback Rehabilitation recognizes the need and the positive impacts of this procedure — key reasons why our in-house FEES program was created."

How Swallow Solutions helps

During a FEES examination, a trained SLP will assess swallow physiology and function for residents who experience swallowing difficulties. The painless imaging procedure is completed in the safety and comfort of the patient's own living environment and does not require anesthesia, allowing the patient to be awake and alert while consuming various liquid and food consistencies and interacting with the SLP.

The SLP will also use the test to identify possible ways to help the individual swallow safely and with less difficulty as part of a speech therapy care plan. This examination can be readministered as needed to determine if there have been any improvements or declines in swallowing over time. Powerback reports approximately 1,400 contracts nationwide for its FEES clinical tool, and plans to further expand the service across its portfolio of therapy services.

"As a leading provider of a wide variety of rehabilitation services, we are well poised to successfully partner... to provide comprehensive therapy services, including solutions for dysphagia," Gerst says. [Read more here.](#)



Fall Prevention Awareness in September

Each year coinciding with the first day of fall, the National Council on Aging promotes Falls Prevention Awareness Week. This year, Falls Prevention Awareness Week is being observed from September 18-22, 2023, with a theme of “From Awareness to Action.” This event is a nationwide observance to raise awareness regarding fall prevention to reduce the risk of falls, injuries from falls and to help older adults live without the fear of falling.

At Powerback Rehabilitation, fall prevention awareness is an everyday focus. Our occupational, physical and speech therapy practitioners are trained in assessment and strategies to take action to promote success and reduce

the risk of adverse events associated with falls. Balance In Action® (BIA) is the infrastructure for the Powerback Rehabilitation Falls Risk Management care delivery model.

Balance In Action encompasses fall risk management across a continuum of care through interdisciplinary screening, assessment, and intervention tools and strategies. With a collaborative and interprofessional approach we can reduce the risk of falls and injuries from falls for those older adults across all levels of function and in all settings. Collaborate with your local Powerback team members to enhance your center’s fall management.



Celebrate National Rehabilitation Awareness Week

National Rehabilitation Awareness Week will be held this year from September 18-24. During this weeklong observance, many Powerback Rehabilitation team members will raise awareness for the many benefits of physical, occupational, speech and respiratory therapy. Keep an eye out in your building for health fairs, open houses, bulletin boards, and activities to help you learn more about the power of rehab.

Ms. Ann's Story: Getting Back to Active Living with Powerback Rehabilitation To You

Ms. Ann is an Assisted Living resident who, in October 2022, suffered a fall, resulting in a left hip fracture and a significant decline in function.

Powerback Rehabilitation To You clinicians evaluated Ms. Ann in March 2023 after completing home health care. At the initial evaluation, Ms. Ann continued to require 24-hour caregivers and was limited in ambulating short distances in the facility with a walker and a caregiver's assistance. She always said, “Don’t let go of me” while walking with the caregivers or therapists. Martha Ann needed the caregivers to initiate all self-care tasks and did not want to participate in activities within the facility.

Due to the dedication of her skilled Powerback Rehabilitation To You team,

who completed therapy in the home, Ms. Ann can now ambulate with supervision and her walker throughout the facility and is initiating self-care tasks independently. She can get dressed independently with just “distant” supervision by her caregivers. Ms. Ann is now actively participating in group activities within the facility. Additionally, her family can travel with her outside the center safely for family gatherings on Sundays and Ms. Ann’s weekly hair appointment.

One of Martha Ann’s paid caregivers stated, “We thoroughly appreciate all that you have done in getting Ms. Ann in top shape for living.”



Left: Troy Duncan, SPT
Right: Ms. Ann, patient



Learn more about Powerback Rehabilitation To You services at www.PowerbackRehabToYou.com

Make a referral online at www.PowerbackReferral.com

Oscar's Story: A Second Chance Thanks to Respiratory Therapy

Sustaining multiple fractures, TBI, and a pneumothorax, Oscar was severely injured by a motor vehicle while riding his bicycle. Because of these injuries, Oscar had to undergo a tracheostomy. When Oscar arrived at a Powerback contracted center in October of 2022, he also required oxygen, was confined to his bed due to pain and contractures, and struggled with communication.

The respiratory therapist, Bre, started working with Oscar. She supported Oscar by weaning oxygen, starting speaking valve trials, and securing a communication board for him. Bre

worked with Oscar on improving and strengthening respiratory muscles, allowing him to move to the next phase of weaning and capping trials. Oscar successfully passed these, which enabled him to have the tracheostomy tube removed. During this period, with the help of Rehab and Nursing, Oscar achieved impressive milestones, including an upgraded diet and the ability to use the remote control and call light without additional aids.

"I feel like I have been given a second chance at life," said Oscar. He continues to work hard and smiles every day.



Left: Oscar, patient
Right: Breona "Bre" Bryant RCP, CRT



Respiratory Care Week in October

When it comes to helping people with chronic lung disease or other breathing issues, respiratory therapists are the front-line heroes. It is for this reason that National Respiratory Care Week is observed annually during the final week of October.

The weeklong celebration of National Respiratory Care Week honors the profession of respiratory care as well as the respiratory therapists, physicians, and nurses that assist patients with lung and breathing issues. This week also raises awareness of typical lung ailments and the best ways to maintain good lung health.

During the celebration, from October 22-28, 2023, Powerback teams will share respiratory services information, staff spotlights, and other information to promote awareness of common lung conditions and best practices for good lung health!



October is Physical Therapy Month

October proves to be an exciting time for Powerback as we also honor our physical therapy practitioners who significantly impact patients' lives. National Physical Therapy Month recognizes these dedicated individuals' exceptional skills, knowledge, and compassion. Whether it's helping patients recover from injuries, manage chronic pain, enhance mobility and function, or establish a wellness plan, our physical therapy practitioners create and deliver personalized treatment plans that positively impact our patients' lives. We are proud to have a team of skilled and compassionate physical therapy practitioners who go above and beyond to provide exceptional care.

We appreciate your continued support, and together, let's make this Physical Therapy Month a meaningful recognition of the remarkable contributions made by these professionals who help transform lives, one step at a time!

Getting Ready for MDS Changes

The Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF) Minimum Data Set 3.0 Resident Assessment Instrument (MDS 3.0 RAI v1.18.11) Manual and item sets will become effective on October 1, 2023.

Click [here](#) to register for our upcoming Powerback Consulting webinar on Thursday, August 17 at 1:00 pm ET when we discuss “Getting ready for MDS Changes - Check In.” This webinar will include a review of Powerback Rehabilitation tools designed to help you partner with Powerback Rehabilitation in preparing for a successful transition.

And, if you missed our webinar in February (“Getting Ready for MDS Changes”) you can access it [here](#). This webinar provided an overview of the MDS sections with new data elements and changes, items that will be required to be reported as part of the Skilled Nursing Facility Quality Reporting Program (SNF QRP) and considerations in preparing for the new MDS 1.18.11. CMS has a number of resources available to assist with preparation for MDS 1.18.11. Powerback compiled a list for your convenience. For more information, click [here](#) to download our Business Partner MDS v1.18.11 Resource List.

SNF Quality Reporting Program Update: Non-Compliance Notifications

CMS provided notifications to Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNFs) that were determined to be out of compliance with SNF Quality Reporting Program (QRP) requirements for calendar year (CY) 2022, which will affect their fiscal year (FY) 2024 Annual Payment Update (APU). Non-compliance notifications were distributed by the Medicare Administrative Contractors (MACs) and placed into facilities’ My Reports folders

in iQIES on July 20, 2023. If you received a letter of non-compliance you may submit a request for reconsideration to CMS via email no later than 11:59 pm, August 18, 2023. If you receive a notice of non-compliance and would like to request a reconsideration, see the instructions in your notification letter and on the [SNF Quality Reporting Reconsideration and Exception & Extension webpage](#).

In Case You Missed It...

CMS released the public inspection version of the FY 2024 SNF Final Rule on July 31, 2023. The rule finalizes the FY 2024 payment rate as a 4.0% increase or approximately 1.4 billion in Medicare Part A payments to SNFs. In addition, it includes updates to the SNF Quality Reporting Program (QRP) and the SNF Value-Based Purchasing (VBP) Program for FY 2024 and future years, including the adoption of a measure intended to address staff turnover. Click [here](#) to download a summary of the key provisions.

On July 13, 2023, CMS posted the public inspection version of the CY 2024 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule (MPFS) Proposed Rule and the proposed rule was published to the Federal Register on August 7,

2023. The Final Rule will take effect on January 1, 2024. The proposed CY 2024 PFS conversion factor is \$32.75, a decrease of \$1.14 (or 3.36%) from the current CY 2023 conversion factor of \$33.89. The change in the conversion factor and other policy changes in the proposed rule will affect each specialty and individual provider differently, depending on the codes billed and geographic area. Cuts in Medicare B reimbursement continue year over year. Ongoing advocacy has helped reduce the cuts. The 2024 rate cut was initially slated to be 1.25% higher. Ongoing advocacy is needed to stabilize its payment system. Click [here](#) to download a summary of the key provisions. Comments can be made [here](#) and are due by September 11, 2023.



► Live Webinar

August 17, 2023 at 1:00 pm ET

[Getting ready for MDS Changes - Check In](#)
Presented by the Powerback Regulatory Team

[REGISTER FOR FREE](#)

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