

## Recovering from catastrophic injury: A patient's journey through the healthcare system and a new model for continued rehabilitative care



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### Abstract

Recovery from neurologic injury (spinal cord injury, brain injury, stroke) is a life-changing process that takes months or years of access to aggressive physical therapy and specialized interventions. Unfortunately, due to the high cost of care in many of the world's complex healthcare systems, many state-of-the-art rehabilitative tools are not offered. Patients are also discharged from rehabilitation after an average of only 28 days, long before they can maximize recovery. As a result, most patients are unprepared emotionally, mentally and physically for life after injury. This void in the continuum of care must change. With the right model of support, it can.

NeuroHope Founder and Executive Director Chris Leeuw shares his moving personal story recovering from a spinal cord injury that left him paralyzed from the neck down, his path to walking again after years of extensive physical therapy, and his leadership behind the creation of a paradigm-changing model that provides long-term and affordable access to evidence-based therapy interventions. Since his outpatient physical therapy clinic opened in 2015, it has been the catalyst behind a change in healthcare legislation, joined the Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation "NeuroRecovery Network" as 1 of 11 global sites participating in their evidence-based interventions, and has partnered with a research team at the Krannert School of Therapy at the University of Indianapolis to track outcome measures of patients that have access to long-term care. Physical improvement in all areas measured has been reported.

This talk shares intimate details of a patient's journey through the healthcare system, how providers can develop a patient-centric approach to care under the right partnerships, and how a new paradigm of outpatient therapy can be replicated in other communities.

### Biography

Chris Leeuw is the Founder and CEO of NeuroHope of Indiana, a non-profit outpatient physical therapy clinic that specializes in long-term care for neurologic injury. In 2010, He sustained a c4 spinal cord injury that initially left him paralyzed from the neck down. After two-years of aggressive therapy, he re-learned to walk and became devoted to change the paradigm of access to rehabilitative care. He has fostered relationships with healthcare providers, Universities, Foundations, and was the catalyst for a change in healthcare legislation signed into law by then-Governor, Vice President Mike Pence in 2015. He has been the recipient of the "Rosenbaum Friend of Physical Therapy Award" by the Indiana Chapter of the APTA, the "Care Innovation Award" by the Foundation for Complex Healthcare Solutions, and has been a featured speaker at many venues, such as "Rehab Week London"(2017), and the "Indiana SCI & TBI Research Conference" (2018). He is a graduate of Indiana University and earned his Master's Degree from the University of Miami (FL).



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