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**JOINT WORKS: EXCELA HEALTH TACKLES JOINT REPLACEMENT SURGERY THROUGH TEAMWORK**

Some things just seem easier when you tackle them as a team, with a cheering squad of supporters. Even joint replacement surgery.

Imagine preparing for and recovering from a hip or knee replacement with a small team of fellow patients who are going through the same thing you are. And each of you is supported by a personal and professional cheering section made up of orthopedic surgeons, nurses, physical therapists, occupational therapists, pharmacists, family and friends.

That's Joint Works at Excelsa Health.

**Preparing for the Big Game**

An innovative approach to surgery and recovery, Joint Works starts on the first day a person prepares for knee or hip replacement surgery.

"Joint Works is a group approach to a highly concentrated rehabilitation environment for those seeking a more rapid recovery after total joint replacement," explained Christopher Bellicini, DO, orthopedic surgeon with Excelsa Health Orthopedics.

As part of a larger patient team, individuals start with a special orientation class taught by a multidisciplinary group of people who focus on answering questions, walking through surgical preparation and explaining what to expect during and after surgery. Medications, anesthesia, pain management, expected daily recovery progress, discharge planning and rehabilitation are all reviewed. This 1<sup>st</sup> Step class is offered several times each month at Excelsa Health hospitals.

Here, patients learn what they can do before surgery to help make the transition back home easier afterward, such as reviewing the floor plan and furniture layout to determine if rearranging items will make walking around easier. Typical schedules and activities are examined to help people decide if they need assistance from friends and family for grocery shopping, pet care or other activities of daily life. Team members often get acquainted during this orientation class and may continue their interaction during pre-operative lab tests at the hospital and again at check-in on the day of surgery.

### **Home Field Advantage**

After surgery, patients stay in a separate hospital area with the rest of the Joint Works team. This special unit is staffed by medical professionals with focused training in joint replacement surgery and recovery. Different from other patient areas in the hospital, patients dress in their own clothing and join other members of the team for a schedule of shared group activities, including group physical therapy sessions. A close friend or family member may join in these sessions to help as a therapy “coach” once the patient returns home. “Competitions” are also slated to add some fun to recovery. On the last day before discharge, the group shares a meal together, enjoying the company of others going through the same recovery process.

### **Why It Works**

The goal is to offer a better experience and better results, from surgical expertise and therapeutic exercise and equipment, to home care and follow-up.

“At Joint Works, we are committed to the comprehensive care of those experiencing total joint replacement through a group-focused regimen,” noted Bruce Hershock, MD, orthopedic surgeon, also with Excelsa Health Orthopedics. “This group care has shown to reduce the length of stay in the hospital while often lessening pain and increasing postsurgical mobility.”

With Joint Works, a little extra support makes a big difference. At each step of preparation and recovery, people have the motivation and encouragement of fellow patients and the positive reinforcement and training of an expert medical staff. This supportive, therapeutic environment can help people who have had joint replacement surgery recover faster so they can return to a healthy, active lifestyle.

To learn more about Joint Works, visit [www.excelahealth.org](http://www.excelahealth.org) or contact Excela Health's Call Center, toll-free, 1-877-771-1234.