

EXPANDING IRF MARKET PRESENCE: A STRATEGIC BLUEPRINT FOR GROWTH

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In today's evolving health care landscape, expanding the presence of inpatient rehabilitation facilities (IRFs) requires more than just infrastructure—it demands strategic insight, collaborative partnerships and data-driven decision-making. The Mary Free Bed Advisory Group offers a comprehensive approach to IRF market expansion, rooted in experience, innovation and a commitment to restoring hope and freedom through rehabilitation.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR MARKET EXPANSION



1. DATA-DRIVEN MARKET ANALYSIS

Understanding national and regional benchmarks is essential. This includes:

- Acute care discharge volumes (including length of stay with targeted DRG groups)
- IRF and sub-acute utilization
- LTACH trends
- Competitive, internal and strategic benchmarks

Our Rehabilitation Team partners with acute care leaders to find opportunities for growth. This scorecard was developed collaboratively alongside care management, acute care therapy, physician and rehabilitation leadership.

STROKE & NEURO CARE MANAGEMENT SCORECARD

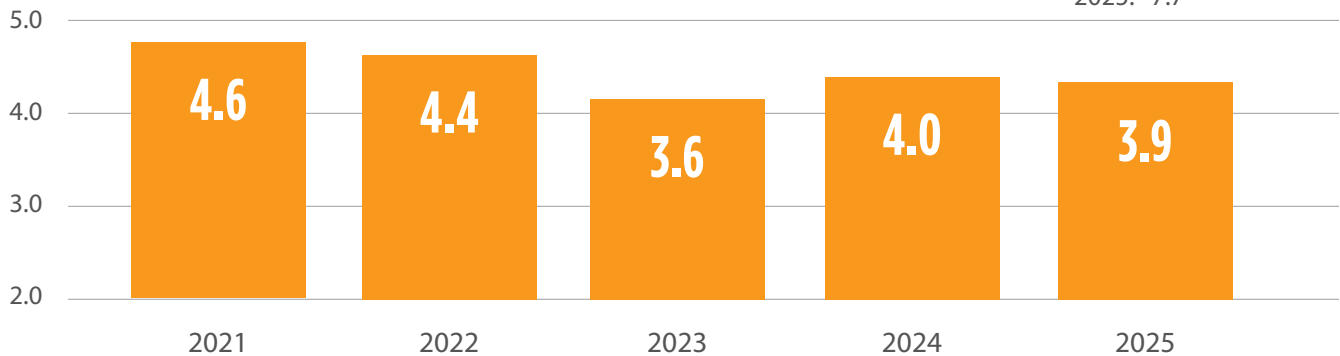
Stroke

GMLOS - Stroke DRGs

Hours to Consult

2021: 8.9

2025: 7.7



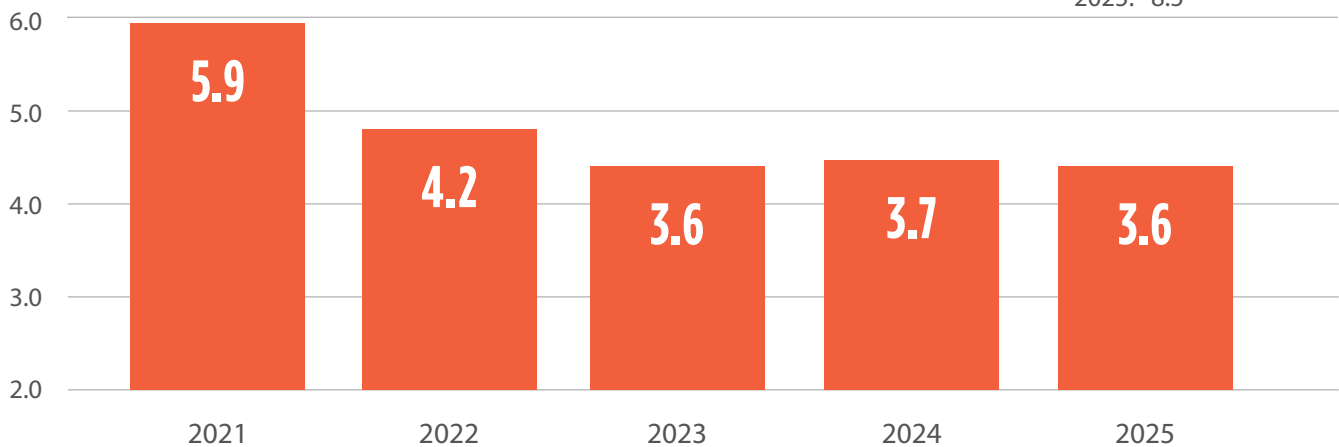
Neuro

GMLOS - Neuro DRGs

Hours to Consult

2021: 9.2

2025: 8.5



2. LOCAL MARKET CONSIDERATIONS

Each region presents unique challenges and opportunities. Factors such as competition, acute care initiatives, preferred providers and consult services must be evaluated. These dashboards illustrate the importance of relationship dynamics to assist acute care hospitals with their IRF potential.

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3. REHAB INTEGRATION STRATEGIES

SUCCESSFUL INTEGRATION HINGES ON FOUR PILLARS.

- 1 Patient access**
PMR consultations, referral development and clinical liaison initiatives
- 2 Brand awareness**
Digital presence, outreach and business development
- 3 System approach**
Centralized utilization review, referral management and scalability
- 4 Stakeholder engagement**
identifying internal champions and fostering collaborative initiatives



PRE-CERTIFICATION HOURS

CALLED TO RECIEVED

15

Insurance denial strategies are key to opening access to inpatient rehabilitation.

Utilization review teams play an important role in patient access. They work to ensure that pre-admission screens contain necessary documentation. They determine when to skip peer-to-peer review after an initial denial or move to an expedited appeal and when to admit a patient prior to obtaining initial insurance authorizations. This is all based on a robust data capture so that teams can make informed, strategic decisions.



4. CENTRALIZED ACCESS FOR EFFICIENCY

Creating a single point of access streamlines operations. A coordinated team—including PM&R, access leaders, clinical liaisons and marketing—works from a central intake point to triage referrals and align admissions based on geography, capacity and patient needs.

5. MARKETING AND BRANDING

The Rehabilitation Team serves as a guide, helping patients navigate the full continuum of care. Through strategic storytelling—such as patient journeys from acute care to IRF—they illustrate the impact of coordinated rehabilitation, reinforce trust and strengthen brand identity across the system. These narratives also align internal teams around a shared understanding of the patient experience, supporting more consistent communication, smoother transitions and stronger referral relationships.

SUSTAINED GROWTH TARGETS

To expand market share, Mary Free Bed targets both acute hospitals and LTACHs.

- **Acute hospitals:** We provide tailored tactics based on resources and access.
- **LTACHs:** Often overlooked, these facilities offer significant referral potential when engaged with aggressive utilization goals and collaborative handoffs.

LET'S DRIVE PERFORMANCE TOGETHER.

Explore how a Mary Free Bed partnership can enhance patient access, improve outcomes and reduce cost across your system. Contact us to learn more about our partnership opportunities and consulting services.

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