



## Lifespan Cardiovascular Institute

Rhode Island Hospital • The Miriam Hospital  
Newport Hospital

*Delivering health with care.®*

### Center for Cardiac Fitness' Patient Ambassador Program

When starting a Cardiac Rehabilitation program you may have many of the following questions:

- How can I fit Cardiac Rehab in with my work schedule?
- Where do I start with making lifestyle changes?
- Am I the only person who has experienced these health challenges?

Our Patient Ambassadors are here to help!

- The Patient Ambassador team members experience heart disease just like yourself. They have successfully completed the 12-week Cardiac Rehabilitation program and now volunteer their time to help ease your enrollment and assist you in answering any questions you may have. By sharing their experiences, our Patient Ambassadors can help you better understand the long term benefits of the journey to improved health. They are here to support you through your Cardiac Rehab program.

Below is some information about our Patient Ambassadors:

#### **Rob S**

**Cardiac Event:** Heart Attack & Stents; cardiac rehab in 2009

**“Aha” moment:** “During the first week of rehab, accepting the fact that I had a cardiac event; realizing it was within my power to get healthy and continue my life.”

**Biggest lifestyle change:** “Examining old habits, implementing sustained changes and making ‘moderation’ a new life theme.”

**Piece of advice:** “From someone who was initially very reluctant to participate in rehab, my advice is, take good care of yourself and stay with it! As demanding as work can be, keep it in perspective. Your health comes first!”

#### **Rocco C, 64**

**Cardiac Event:** Coronary Artery Bypass Surgery; cardiac rehab 2015

**Career:** Self Employed/Marketing

**“Aha” moment:** “After being in rehab for 5 weeks & having much trepidation, I had to receive another Stent. Then had to start all over again and only then did I realize just how much I needed rehab and the people there who saved my life (my case manager Laura).”

**Favorite things about cardiac rehab:** “My case manager, Laura, and the others in class....the people I’ve met, the help I’ve received. In general it has been a life changing experience. That is why I feel it important to let others know.”

**Piece of advice:** “Listen, stay positive and accept all the help. Know you can get better!”

**Rico M, 82**

**Cardiac Event:** Heart Failure; cardiac rehab 2014

**“Aha” moment:** “When I quickly saw the people involved in the program working to help patients recover with style and grace. To have access to staff and experts in nutrition, psychology and cardiology all in one location was remarkable. I thought, of course I’m going to take advantage of all of these opportunities!

**Biggest lifestyle change:** “Food control of sodium, sugar, fats/oils, alcohol; increasing my fruits and vegetables and reading food labels.”

**Keith B, 65**

**Cardiac Event:** Heart Attack, Stents; cardiac rehab 2005

**Career:** Commercial Painting Contractor

**“Aha” moment:** “I realized the importance and benefit of the cardiac program in about the 8<sup>th</sup> week when I began feeling stronger and less afraid.”

**Biggest lifestyle change:** “Learning to make my health the most important priority.”

**Favorite thing about cardiac rehab:** “The great staff. The knowledge, professionalism, attention and caring that all staff members give in this program is second to none.”

**Kerry K, 71**

**Cardiac Event:** Heart attack; cardiac rehab 2001

**“Aha” moment:** When I learned that I didn’t have to be an invalid for the rest of my life.”

**Biggest lifestyle change:** “Low fat, low salt diet and regular exercise.”

**Favorite thing about cardiac rehab:** “It helps keep me healthy and therefore alive. It is staffed by beautiful people who have chosen their careers based on improving the quality of life of others.”

**Piece of advice:** “Do what the professionals tell you- take control of your life.”