

Pillars of Service

HEAL and Family Navigation & Support Teams:

The process begins with the HEAL Team. These experienced trauma-informed SCI Navigators, who have been there themselves and who are trained in offering relational support, are there for the families and medical teams on the front end of the SCI experience in the first hours, weeks, and months of crisis. The trauma-healing trained **HEAL** Team travels to be bedside with families from the earliest hours of injury, bringing **Hope, Empathy, Advocacy, and Logistical** and medical tips with care and compassion.

The HEAL Team then hands off to a Navigator on the Family Navigation & Support Team. This Navigator provides personalized relational support 24/7, empowering families with technical, practical, and medical information during the first 30 days of injury and through many transitions. Families often need significant emotional support and logistical management help. They also need support engaging meaningfully with medical staff who are often siloed, not SCI experienced, and not trauma-informed. Navigators walk alongside families helping them stay hopeful, providing mediation and conflict transformation tips, and helping them stay a step ahead to transition their lives successfully.

The Family Navigation & Support Team is supported by a world-class SCI/TBI Medical Expert Team and a Wrap-Around Team with expertise ranging from ADA and insurance issues to integrative health and nutrition, to financial and legal best practices, to breathwork and spiritual self-care.

Spinal Cord Injury Medical Expert Team:

The SCI/TBI Medical Expert Team includes some of the nation's top SCI neck surgeons, musculoskeletal radiologists, TBI neurologists, physiatrists, rehabilitation doctors, wound care specialists, neuro urologists, trauma nurses, respiratory therapists, physical therapists, occupational therapists, speech therapists and other medical professionals with expertise in SCI and TBI, which often accompanies SCI. The panel can read x-ray films in the first hours of injury and provide needed medical information that arises in the Navigator-Family support relationship.

Digital Resource Library:

Blink of an Eye™ is creating a cutting-edge digital web-based resource for SCI with a focus on the trauma experience and essential, practical information needed by families, friends, and medical staff in the first days, weeks, and months from injury. The Digital Resource Library–The Essential SCI Survival Guide–will include relational interaction tips -- what you need to know, what to do and what not to do, what to say and what not to say -- as well as cutting edge and practical medical tips for the hospital stay and each transition.

The Essential SCI Survival Guide will be tailored for the questions and concerns posed by three distinct audiences -- families, friends, and medical staff. Families will want to know what to expect, how to best advocate for their loved one, how to effectively navigate with insurance providers, medical teams, social media, and friends, and what they need to anticipate for their homes. Friends will want to know how best to provide support to their friends in crisis and how to gather support for them. Medical staff will want information about how to respond to families in shock and what they need to know about SCI to be of real help to families in crisis.

The Essential SCI Survival Guide is intended to be easily navigable, available 24/7 around the globe, and focused on *filling the gap* with essential medical and practical information in the critical hours, days, and weeks of the SCI crisis. The Guide will be the hub for essential follow-on information that families and medical staff need after transitioning from the ICU with spokes to follow-on resources offered by model SCI and TBI facilities, rehabilitation centers, and medical research and SCI non-profits and foundations that provide grants and services.