



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**Falling Forward Foundation Announces Partnership with
Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago**

***Funding will Support Illinois Residents Recovering from Catastrophic
Medical Events After Insurance Benefits Run Out***

Chicago, Illinois – March 29, 2016 – Falling Forward Foundation, the only nonprofit that provides grants for the continued physical rehabilitation of people who have run out of insurance benefits, today announced a partnership with the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago (RIC). The two parties were inspired by U.S. Senator Mark Kirk (R-Ill.), who recovered from a stroke in 2012 and is a strong voice for the power of rehabilitation. As part of the collaboration, an annual grant made to RIC will fund the continued outpatient rehabilitation of select Illinois residents whose insurance benefits have been exhausted.

Each year, more than one million Americans suffer catastrophic medical events, including strokes, traumatic brain injuries, and spinal cord injuries --- an estimated 45,000 people in Illinois. Many of these people do not fully recover because rehabilitation is limited in their medical insurance. In fact, according to studies by the American Physical Therapy Association, 99% of Americans face a “therapy cap” in their insurance – whether private insurance, Medicare or Medicaid – yet few people are aware of this limitation until a catastrophic event occurs.

Falling Forward Foundation was launched to address this significant gap in rehabilitation benefits. Sam Porritt, an Illinois native, founded the organization after recovering from a spinal cord injury in 2011. Before his injury, Porritt had never heard of a “therapy cap” and was unaware that his insurance was among the 1% with no cap.

“I attribute my recovery to the fact that my rehabilitation was not limited,” said Porritt. “I had the opportunity to continue going to physical therapy as long as my body was recovering. It’s the reason I’m walking today.”

Since 2013, Falling Forward’s grants have helped [44 people recover to their full potential](#), underscoring what’s possible with adequate rehabilitation. People given the opportunity to continue rehabilitation have gone from physically impaired to living full productive lives, including the ability to walk, drive, parent and return to work.

“RIC is the nation’s leading provider of comprehensive physical medicine and rehabilitation care, and everything we do is motivated by our vision to advance recovery for individuals with functional loss resulting from injury or illness,” said Peggy Kirk, senior vice president and chief clinical operating officer at RIC. “We are pleased to partner with Falling Forward Foundation, and to help our patients go even further in their recovery.”



“Following my stroke, I learned how critical it is that people receive adequate rehabilitation,” shared Senator Kirk. “The support I received at RIC made it possible for me to climb the 45 steps up to the U.S. Capitol just one year after my stroke. The partnership between Falling Forward and RIC will help more Illinois residents receive the care they need to live to their full potential.”

The partnership with RIC marks Falling Forward’s fourth such collaboration. The program began on March 1, with RIC’s outpatient therapy staff directing funds to eligible patients. The first chosen recipient is a local law school student who was recently diagnosed with vasculitis, which caused weakness in his upper and lower extremities, leading to increased pain and decreased strength and balance. Under RIC’s care, the patient began to make gains only to face an insurance limitation that led to a pause in his treatment and decline in his function. Thanks to Falling Forward’s grant, this patient is now able to continue his therapy without a gap in care. In a short period of time, he’s already been able to make functional progress, and has improved endurance, walking ability, balance and coordination. In fact, he plans to return to law school in the fall after being forced to take a year off.

About Falling Forward Foundation

Falling Forward Foundation is the only nonprofit organization in America making grants that fund continued rehabilitation for people who have suffered catastrophic medical events (e.g., strokes, traumatic brain injuries, spinal cord injuries) after their insurance benefits run out. Since 2013, our grants have helped 44 people in Colorado, Kansas and Missouri recover to their full potential. Therapy caps lead to "disability". WE STAND FOR ABILITYsm. To view patient videos and learn more, visit: www.fallingforward.org.

About The Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago

The Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago (RIC) is the nation’s leading provider of comprehensive physical medicine and rehabilitation care to patients from around the world. Founded in 1954, RIC has been designated the “No. 1 Rehabilitation Hospital in America” by *U.S. News & World Report* every year since 1991. RIC sets the standard of care in the post-acute market through its innovative applied research and discovery programs, particularly in the areas of neuroscience, bionic medicine, musculoskeletal medicine and technology transfer. For more information, go to: www.ric.org.

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