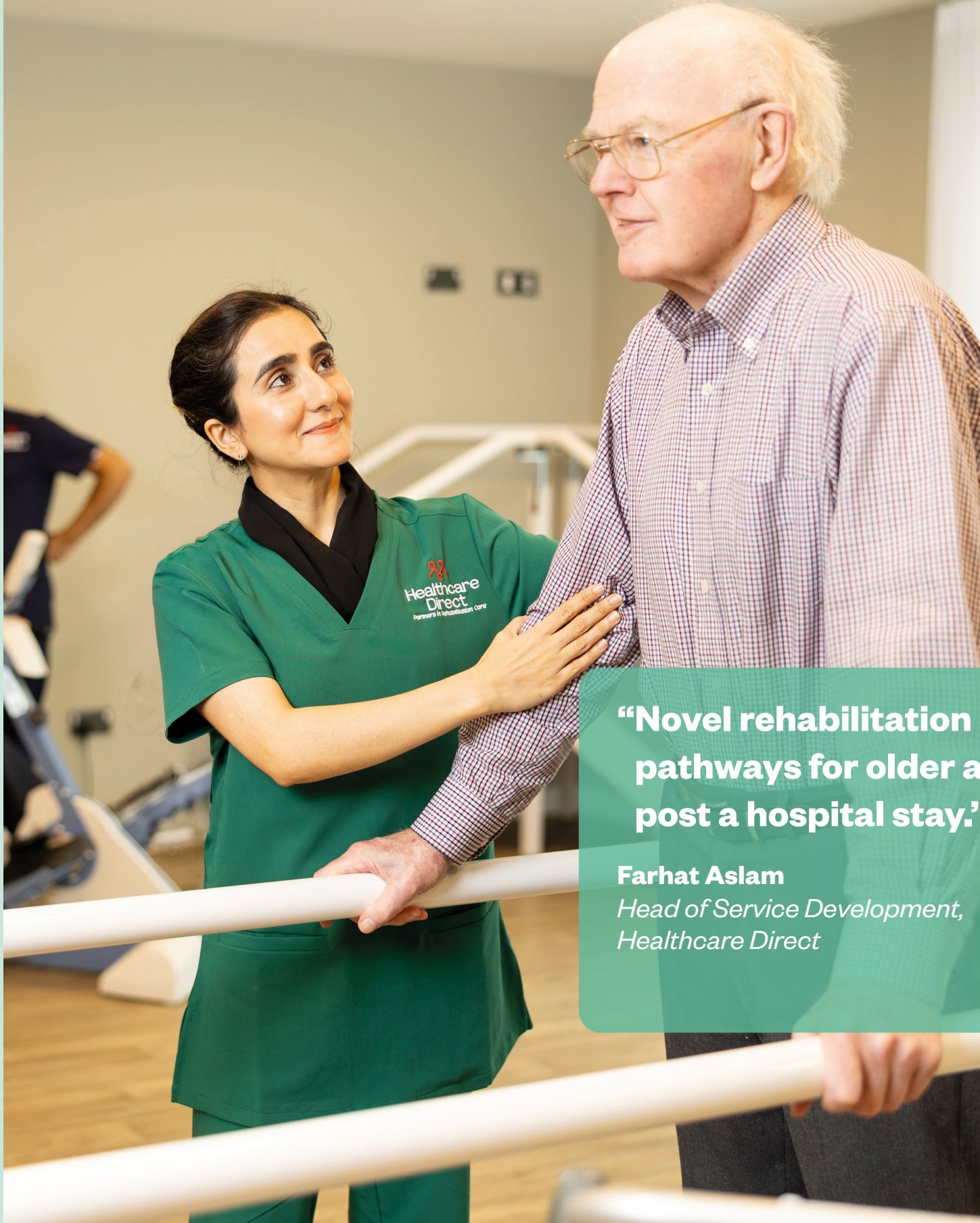


Innovations in Patient Care



“Novel rehabilitation pathways for older adults post a hospital stay.”

Farhat Aslam
*Head of Service Development,
Healthcare Direct*

The transformative impact of post-acute geriatric rehabilitation

It is estimated that 25% of older adults admitted to an acute hospital each year require post-acute rehabilitation. This is equivalent to 42,000 people. Once their acute care has finished, they can recover their function and have longer-term resilience with post-acute rehabilitation.



Laura Tobin
Head of Operations,
Healthcare Direct



Cora Carroll
Head of Quality &
Workforce,
Healthcare Direct

Older adults occupy the majority of beds in acute hospitals. They have the most complex needs and deteriorate from their functional baseline by 30% while in hospital, irrespective of the reason for admission.

National and international evidence consensus recommends the rehabilitation pathway for all older adults to avoid prolonged hospital stays and consequently unnecessary or premature admissions to long-term residential care. Having predictable access to post-acute rehabilitation is a critical determinant of better outcomes post illness or surgery.

Meeting the growing demand for post-acute rehabilitation

The demand is growing exponentially, given the changing and ageing demographics. Providing the capacity to deliver that at the pace of demand is challenging. The HSE Recommendations on Post-Acute Rehabilitation have highlighted a significant national capacity shortfall.

A public-private collaboration is one way of making up for the shortfall now and into the future. In partnership with Mowlam Healthcare, Healthcare Direct (HCD) provides exactly this — focused geriatric post-acute rehabilitation leading to a return home.

Healthcare Direct may be a new name to many, but our company has been transforming the provision of

multi-disciplinary service solutions within Ireland since its establishment in 2009. HCD has the full range of rehabilitation specialists (healthcaredirect.ie) and is leading the implementation of a novel post-acute service in Ireland.

Having predictable access to post-acute rehabilitation is a critical determinant of better outcomes post illness or surgery.

A commitment to geriatric rehabilitation
Headquartered in Limerick city, Healthcare Direct maintains services to a growing client base across the country, ranging from HIQA-registered residential care facilities to post-acute

rehabilitation centres and both in-patient and out-patient hospital settings. We are leading the provision of geriatric rehabilitation with teams of clinicians and therapists, and our key strength is in measuring our effectiveness.

Distilling the essence of rehabilitation, we are now publishing data across four quadrants — Activity, Interventions, Outcomes and Patient Experience. Core datasets for each rehabilitation discipline have been agreed and use specific and sensitive quantitative measures. Data is synthesised and presented visually, tailored to client reporting requirements and patient profile.

An exemplary discharge home rate is achieved across services where our older patients provide their unwavering focus and effort in their quest to return home.

From 100 days in hospital to walking home: why quality **rehabilitation matters**

‘I was told I’d never walk again.’ Sean Smullen’s remarkable journey from being told he may never walk again to regaining his independence, highlighting the transformative impact of high-quality rehabilitation.



Farhat Aslam
Head of Service
Development

Following a fall at his home in Wicklow town, Sean Smullen found himself admitted to hospital, where he spent over 100 days trying to regain his mobility. “I have very little recollection of the first 20 or 30 days, as I was in so much pain,” he recalls.

With multi-morbidity including lymphoma, Parkinson’s and recurrent falls, Smullen found that his mobility suffered during his hospital admission, to the point where doctors told him he would never walk again. “Being told you won’t walk again is extremely depressing,” explains Smullen.

His experience highlights the profound physical and emotional impact that a prolonged hospital stay can have on older adults, with deconditioning and loss of mobility making the prospect of returning home increasingly difficult.

Rehabilitation supported by multidisciplinary teams

Smullen was admitted to Leopardstown Care Centre for 28

days of intensive rehabilitation from an acute hospital, where he received assessment from a multidisciplinary team, including physiotherapists, nurses, occupational therapists, therapy assistants, doctors and social workers. Commencing a therapeutic regime in its first-class rehab facility, Smullen had access to the space, equipment and surroundings suitable for his rehabilitation, co-located within a nursing home.

“I think it’s partly attributed to my stubbornness, but mostly to the amazing team who helped me,” says Smullen. “I did an hour of rehab every morning and afternoon with a physiotherapist. I slowly went from not being able to walk at all, to standing from my wheelchair, to shuffling, to walking with a frame, and now I would say I have around 80% of my pre-hospital mobility back,” which Smullen identifies as being a credit to everything the staff has done for him.

Regaining independent mobility

Sean achieved independent mobility and reached all his rehab goals, returning home to his wife Margaret, who he explains has also been instrumental in his recovery. “My wife has helped me so much, buying mobility aids and grab rails to support me in retaining my independence at home. I couldn’t have done it without her,” he says.

“People take the little things for granted, like being able to take a shower by yourself. This rehab programme has helped me go from the lowest point in my life to regaining my independence. For that, I will always be grateful,” he concludes.

Post-acute geriatric rehabilitation enables older adults to return to what matters most to them: going back home to their familiar environment where they can regain a sense of purpose, independence.



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