

[EXCERPT]

## Chicago's Top Doctors

For a person confronting cancer, treatment doesn't end with the oncologist. A man recuperating from prostate cancer may feel hip or back pain, or he might have problems rising from a seated position or walking. A woman undergoing treatment for breast cancer may experience lymphedema, a painful swelling in the arm—or she might begin to feel peripheral neuropathy, a combination of numbness and tingling in her limbs. Until those problems are overcome, the patient's recovery remains incomplete.

"[Surviving cancer] has become commonplace," says Gail L. Gamble, 62, the medical director of cancer rehabilitation at the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago (RIC). "But without a comprehensive rehab program, it can be survivorship with some functional impairment. In the busy world of cancer care, 'function' has not always been a high-priority word."

Gamble acknowledges that the concept of a rehabilitation team partnering closely with an oncology team is a relatively new idea. "Many places don't begin to address rehab until after the acute cancer treatment is completed," she says. "We believe that rehab can be coordinated with cancer treatments, enabling cancer survivors to regain functional ability and to attain the best quality of life." Toward that end,

RIC now partners with the Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center at Northwestern Memorial Hospital, integrating rehab medicine with oncology care. Gamble is also adding education and research components to the RIC program, while assuring that it better addresses all the needs of cancer survivors.

Integrated patient care is one of the hallmarks of the Mayo clinic in Minnesota, where Gamble completed her medical school training and residency and spent another 25 years in the clinic's physical medicine and cancer rehab programs. Two years ago RIC recruited her to expand its cancer rehab program, attracted, perhaps, by Gamble's mixture of enterprise and enthusiasm. "Being a champion for cancer survivors—this is my passion," she says.

According to Gamble, her approach isn't just about getting the patient walking again. "We want the patient to return to his or her greatest level of ability," she says. "And, most important, the person who defines that level is the patient. What ability do they want to reach for? That's one of our first questions, Gamble has brought a team approach—which pairs psychologists, social workers, and speech, physical, and occupational therapists—to RIC's cancer patient care.

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### Gail L. Gamble

Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation

Rehabilitation Institute  
of Chicago



Photo by Erika Dufour



## Chicago's Top Doctors CONTINUED

Gamble and her team clearly have their work cut out for them given the long list of survivorship issues. "About 60 percent of cancer patients complain about fatigue," she says. "There can be cognitive memory issues, paralysis, loss of endurance, changes in the body image, feelings of isolation, bowel and bladder issues, and feelings of sexual dysfunction. And I haven't even mentioned pain yet."

Gamble regularly travels back to her physician husband in Minnesota, so it's little wonder that her time is stretched. "I may not be getting all the exercise a rehabilitation physician should be," she says "But I'm excited. I think we're changing the paradigm of cancer care in this community."

-M.F.C.

### THE DOCTOR'S LIST [EXCERPT]

#### PHYSICAL MEDICINE & REHABILITATION

**David Chen**

Spinal Cord Injury. RIC. 312-238-1000.

**Gail Gamble**

Functional impairments related to cancer. RIC. 312-238-1000.

**Todd Kuiken**

Amputee rehabilitation; prosthesis control, gait disorders. RIC. 312-238-7767

**Joel Press**

Sports medicine; back pain; musculoskeletal injuries. RIC. 312-238-1000.

**Elliot Roth**

Stroke rehabilitation; neurologic rehabilitation; geriatric rehabilitation. RIC. 312-238-1000.

**Charles Sisung**

Rheumatic diseases of childhood; trauma rehabilitation and burn care for children. RIC. 312-238-1000.

**James Sliwa**

Post-polio syndrome (rehabilitation); multiple sclerosis; back pain. RIC. 312-238-1000.

**Joanne C. Smith**

Pelvic and back pain. RIC. 312-238-0815.

#### PAIN MEDICINE

**R. Norman Harden**

Back pain; RSD; fibromyalgia; headache. RIC. 312-238-7800.

#### RHEUMATOLOGY

**Rowland Chang**

Rheumatoid arthritis; arthritis; ankylosing spondylitis. RIC. 312-238-1156.

