

## Portuguese Speaking, Professional Care Pilgrim Rehabilitation

*Providing care with  
promptness, sensitivity,  
respect compassion, and  
integrity.*



Maria Machado with Tanya Brasil, RN (above) and Christina Palmer, PTA (below)



### Case Study

She didn't know what to expect when she arrived in the United States 44 years ago from her native Açores islands, but her entire family came to live in the North Shore area to join her brother. Now 81, Maria Machado, who worked for many years in a baby shoe factory in Lynn, lives with her brother in senior housing. It was in October when she became disoriented and fell at home in the kitchen hitting her head. She was taken to Massachusetts General Hospital for the injury, which was ultimately discovered to be a slight fracture in the C2 vertebrae. She wouldn't need surgery, but she would need to wear a neck collar to stabilize the injured bone and allow it heal properly. She would also need a focused regimen of rehabilitation to help her ensure her balance, strength and abilities to be independent. Further, as an individual who only speaks Portuguese, her primary care physician is Eudaldo J. Troncoso, MD, who can better communicate with her about her health. For her rehabilitation, she chose Pilgrim Rehabilitation and the only full Portuguese language program on the North Shore. It includes a wide array of staff and support who speak the language and are immersed in Portuguese culture.

### Interdisciplinary Team Treatment Plan

After her arrival at Pilgrim Rehabilitation November 23<sup>rd</sup>, Maria began a daily regimen of physical and occupational therapy.

### Physical & Occupational Therapy

- After her injury and time spent inactive in the hospital, Maria had lost a great deal of strength and could not stand without assistance.
- Therapists helped work with her to improve her orientation while standing, balance, and walking with assistance. Ambulation with the use of a walker for greater distances improved her endurance, walking on stairs enhanced her agility.
- With the use of weights and hands-on flexing and stretching by therapists, Maria's legs and lower body were strengthened.
- Maria worked to regain confidence in performing tasks in the home, including her ADLs and kitchen chores.
- Upper body strengthening with the use of weights and hand-eye coordination exercises further improved her confidence.

**Outcome:** Maria progressed, and with her spunky demeanor, she adds even more energy to the excellent rehab department at Pilgrim. While she's eager to get home to be with her brother, she'll miss the staff, saying she'll "cry when she leaves."

**In the Patient's Own Words (translated):** "Everyone is very professional, very helpful and they're always there for you. Having Portuguese speaking staff is very important. I feel better knowing people can speak the language because I know my needs are being met."

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