

# Glenwood Care Center Features Biodesx Balance Technology in Successful Fall Risk Screening Program

## Glenwood Care Facility



**BIODEX**  
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A Glenwood Therapist prepares the Biodex Balance System for patient balance testing.

### Glenwood Care Facility

Glenwood Care Facility located in Oxnard, CA started as a private facility in 1969. It was part of Beverly Health Care for a time and in 2003 it was acquired by the Ensign Group. It is a skilled nursing facility that provides short-term rehabilitation as well as long-term care. The goal at Glenwood is to provide patients with premier care and get them back home. The numbers exemplify Glenwood's success; 97% of those admitted to Glenwood either go home or to a lower level of care.

Glenwood's attention to care has not gone unnoticed. The facility will be included on the upcoming US News and World Report Honor Roll of top skilled nursing facilities in the US. In addition, the facility has reached the highest levels on the ratings guidelines by Medicare.

### A new Direction for Glenwood



Dave Merkley,  
Executive Director,  
Glenwood Care Center

Dave Merkley, Executive Director at Glenwood, is very proud of the accomplishments of the facility. He has been with Glenwood for five years. His role is to ensure that Glenwood is compliant with local and federal levels of care and is financially viable. One of the challenges that Mr. Merkley and his team face is changing the image of Glenwood from a convalescent home to a skilled nursing facility.

Glenwood is a state-of-the-art rehabilitation facility that continually looks to improve its services with new techniques and technology. Customized therapy programs

are developed for each patient by the in-house therapy team. The team members work with the patients' physician to create a unique treatment plan. They even provide specialized equipment to aid in treatment.

Glenwood has a full-time, in-house therapy team allowing patients and therapists to get to know one another. Having the same therapy team working with a patient every day is a big plus, and Glenwood always seeks to achieve just the right "match" between patient and therapist, for optimal results and comfort.

The therapy staff takes pride in the performance of the therapy department as well as the entire facility. The therapists provide ongoing education and training to other disciplines, to ensure the continuity of care between therapy and nursing.

One of the areas of focus for changing the image of the facility was the way the rehabilitation process was being viewed. "We were looking to move away from passive therapy to active therapy," explains Merkley. The decision was made to add the Biodex Balance System SD to their rehabilitation program as part of this move in a new direction.

### Why the Biodex Balance System SD?

The Balance System SD is the only system that provides a fast, accurate Fall Risk Screening evaluation for older adults. It provides objective reporting necessary to show need, progress and outcome, all of which are required by Medicare. The results are compared to age-based normative data to help identify potential fall candidates.

Currently, Glenwood is using the balance assessment tool in older adults as a more active form of testing prior to and during therapy. According to Merkley, "Up until the time we got the Biodex Balance System SD, a balance assessment was based solely on the therapist's subjective



evaluation. These evaluations could be completely different from one therapist to the next. We were not able to show progress, one of the key things Medicare looks for in patient care. When progress stops, so do the Medicare payments, and the patient can no longer receive care and is stuck at that level.”

“The reports produced by the Balance System SD fit within the Medicare Guidelines. All the therapists have to do is print the report and put it in the charts. There can be no questions after that. It removes the subjectivity. Therapists and the Director of Rehab are comfortable continuing therapy because they are safeguarded with this data,” explains Merkley.

### **All Residents at Glenwood benefit from Fall Risk Assessment**



The patient can see immediate feedback while going through the Fall Risk Assessment on the Biodes Balance System.

The Balance System SD is being used on every patient. For short-term residents it is used to document progress. As soon as they are able, the patient is put on the Balance System to get a baseline. Prior to discharge, they get a summary report that shows their progress throughout their stay. They can come back to Glenwood at any time to be re-evaluated. “Patients love to be able to see the results on the screen. They appreciate the direct and immediate feedback which gives them more motivation,” stated Merkley.

Fall risk screening using the Balance System SD is provided for the long-term patients as well. It is done on a quarterly basis. Documentation is evaluated for potential restorative therapy.

### **Balance System SD out in the Local Community**

Glenwood uses the Balance System SD to educate the community about fall risk assessment. They take it to



Visitors at a health fair line up to receive a Fall Risk Assessment using the Biodes Balance System.

every health fair, and provide Fall Risk Screening for anyone who wants to be evaluated for specific risk factors known to contribute to falling and decreased mobility. Each person is provided with a printout of their Fall Risk Assessment and they are told that they can be screened again the next time Glenwood is at an event or they can go to Glenwood at any time to be re-evaluated. If there is a decline in their postural stability, they can take the two assessments to their primary care physician for a restorative therapy referral.

“People attending the event are so excited because they receive hard data. Our booth is the only one at the fairs that has a line from the time the doors open until the end of the day,” states Dave. “It’s awesome!”

“We also bring it to assisted living communities and the administrators love it. They started referring residents to us because they see the value in it and understand we want to get people back to them.”

### **The future of the Balance System SD at Glenwood**

There is so much potential for the Balance System according to Mr. Merkley, “Our plan is to expand the use of the Balance System SD into the actual rehab process, not just use it in the assessment portion. We will begin to use the 8-step balance conditioning protocol.”

“We can also use it with the local football teams to provide balance assessment screening for concussion. We can go to gyms and let them use it with some of their programs. Our focus would remain on seniors, but in our area there are a lot of second- and third-generation locals with parents still in the community.”

Orthopedic facilities are another great source for referrals. One of the key points Glenwood educates on within hip and knee replacement groups is that many people who have replacement naturally shift weight to the good side.

This then causes problems on the good side, sometimes leading to replacements on that side. The Balance System will help them feel what 50/50 balance now feels like with a new knee/hip, helping reduce damage to the uninvolved side.

There are intentions to start taking the Balance System to physician's offices to demonstrate how it works and the value it provides. "We have found that once the physician tests the system and sees the functionality and reporting, they begin to refer patients to our facility for rehabilitation." Mr. Merkley goes on to explain that, "although it is not part of what we use it for, when we tell the doctor that the NFL uses this machine for concussion management they are very impressed."

One of the marketing strategies for making the community aware of the Balance System and its benefits involves the whole Glenwood team. Mr. Merkley explains a new employee incentive program centered around the Balance System. "We are in the process of creating a "pass along card" that we can give to employees. When they see an elderly person in the community, they give it to them. The card will tell them a little about the program and then direct them to call to set up a Fall Risk Screening appointment here at Glenwood, or tell them about a community event where they can go to get screened. The employee will put their name on the card so that when the person comes in for the assessment, the employee name will go into a drawing for a prize. This will help to drive employee participation."



A member of the Glenwood staff reviews the results of the Fall Risk Screening with a patient.

By promoting to the area physicians, hospital discharge planners and the community, Glenwood is positioning itself as the leading provider of Medicare-paid, short-term inpatient rehabilitation in the area.

Dave Merkley expressed his happiness with the Biodex Balance System SD by stating, "I'm thinking about getting another Balance System SD just to use out in the community. It is so worth its weight in gold."

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**Balance System™ SD**  
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