

# BACK TO BIKING and a pain-free life

By Andrew Shanley

After a severe ice storm last winter, Evelyn "Evie" Vincenzo and her husband, Frank, were clearing trees from their 150-acre property in Ashfield. Frank's job was to cut the damaged trees, while Evie's was to pull them from the woods. Evie had been fighting a bad back off-and-on for years, but she thought she could handle the job.

The second day, the hospital's physical therapy team arrived. "They all introduced themselves and explained to me why they were there, what they were going to do and the process I was going to go through so I could walk out of the hospital and begin outpatient therapy," Evie says. "Just their upbeat, enthusiastic approach was enough for me to

They treated me with respect and gave me confidence in their care, the process, and what I could do to meet my goal of being pain free."

"The care of patients with spinal pain is extremely complex," says Jeff King, manager of Baystate Rehabilitation Care at Baystate Franklin. "We are a specialized spine rehabilitation program. That means we offer a higher level of expertise when examining patients with spinal pain, and a greater awareness of the root causes of spinal problems and the various treatment options."

King, who holds a doctorate in physical therapy and is a certified manual therapist, notes that patients receive instructions for the exercise routines best suited to their specific condition.

Up until this point, Evie thought her goal of being pain free was nearly impossible. After all, she had lived with back pain for much of her adult life. "I used ice packs and heating pads, whatever would give me temporary relief. I thought it would always be this way. But that's until I found Baystate Rehabilitation Care at Baystate Franklin. It's just unbelievable what they did for me."

Evie has achieved her goal of living pain free. "My husband tells people, 'They gave me my wife back.' It's true. I'm able to live an active life again, working in the garden, riding my motorcycle—without the agony. I never would have believed it. I sure believe it now."

**Baystate Rehabilitation Care provides a full range of rehabilitation services to help patients regain function and achieve recovery. Inpatient care is provided at Baystate Medical Center in Springfield, Baystate Franklin Medical Center in Greenfield, and Baystate Mary Lane Hospital in Ware. Outpatient services for adults are available in Agawam, East Longmeadow, Greenfield, South Hadley, Springfield, and Ware. For more information, visit [baystatehealth.org/brc](http://baystatehealth.org/brc).**



Evelyn "Evie" Vincenzo and her husband Frank

The next morning, her entire back had gone into spasms. She literally couldn't move. Frank called for an ambulance and Evie was transported to the Emergency Department at Baystate Franklin Medical Center in Greenfield.

"When we got there, the E.D. nurses were so supportive and caring, and even took the time to comfort Frank," Evie recalls. "He was concerned about how they would handle me, but they definitely handled me with care."

From the Emergency Department, Evie was taken to Radiology for an MRI of her lumbar spine. From there, she was admitted to the hospital for observation and pain management.

"The whole first day I couldn't move," Evie says. "I couldn't even roll around in the bed. I had one nurse who sat at my bedside and rubbed my hands and feet with cream. That was even better than the pain meds!"

get out of bed and make an effort. And they were right. I felt better and better every time I got up and moving."

Evie says that if she had to describe her experience at Baystate Franklin in a single word it would be—heartwarming. "Everybody was so kind," she says. "I knew immediately that I was in good hands. This was truly one of the best medicines they could administer."

She says the care was equally compassionate when she arrived for outpatient physical therapy at Baystate Rehabilitation Care. "I walked into their waiting area, stepped up to the window and the young lady said, 'You must be Evelyn, welcome. Don't sit down, we're ready for you.' I couldn't believe my ears. This just doesn't happen!"

Maybe the most impressive thing about her rehabilitation experience, Evie says, is the individual attention she received. "I felt special. It was all about their professionalism.