

# SPOTon

Speech Physical Occupational Therapy newsletter | May 2015



## WE'RE **NATIONALLY KNOWN**, BUT **LOCALLY FOCUSED**

RehabCare is the leading provider of rehabilitation services, including physical, occupational and speech-language therapies, to over 2,000 hospitals and long-term care facilities in 47 states. The SPOTon newsletter is our way of informing, recognizing and celebrating the students who form the future Rehab Therapist community.



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## A NEW PROTOCOL FOR MOVEMENT DISORDERS



A RehabCare team has developed a three-tier protocol to provide a standardized approach for treating patients with movement disorders. The protocol for the treatment of balance deficiencies and lack of coordination also aims to create a continuum of care for the patient across different levels of functional abilities. It borrows principles from four well-established treatment methods:

- Neurodevelopmental Treatment (NDT) – Developed in the 1940s for the treatment of children with cerebral palsy, this treatment recreates movement patterns emphasizing midline and symmetry, mobility on stability patterns, proximal to distal progression and recreating the ‘feeling’ of normal movement
- Proprioceptive Neuromuscular Facilitation (PNF) – This process facilitates muscle elongation for the rehabilitation of patients with spasticity and weakness
- LSVT BIG – Developed in early 2000s as an intensive amplitude-based exercise program for the limb motor system, this therapy focuses on re-education of the sensory motor system using principles of neuroplasticity and neuroprotection as treatment rationale

- Tai Chi – Based on Taoist philosophy dating back to the 1500s, this is the synergistic practice, integration and interaction of meditation, martial arts and health



The plan is for the protocol to be utilized as a standardized approach in outpatient and SNF settings for evidence-based best practices and measurable outcomes. Protocol developers hope that the programming will maximize treatment efficacy and positive outcomes – while expanding the toolbox for therapists.

The movement disorders protocol was rolled out in Kansas and Missouri in Q4 and all clinical performance specialists were trained in it at the end of last year. It will be used by physical and occupational therapists at first and will then expand to speech language therapy.

The team that developed the protocol includes April Rice, PT, DPT; Staci Freudiger, PT, MBA; Leta Kant, PT; Lauren Kriz, MA, LMT; Julie Thornton, OTD, OTR/L; and Misty Coleman, MHS, CCC-SLP.





## BETH REIGART JOINS THE ALLEN COGNITIVE NETWORK



Beth Reigart, MPH, OTR, is now a proud member of the board for the Allen Cognitive Network.

Beth is thrilled to begin working alongside Claudia Allen, MA, OTR, FAOTA, who has always been on the forefront of how advances in the understanding of the human mind can be incorporated into practice. Claudia's numerous workshops and publications are enjoyed because she helps therapists articulate the value of their services and produce functional outcomes that are realistic, meaningful and reimbursable.

Claudia is respected internationally for her work on how to use residual abilities to engage individuals in meaningful activities. The Allen Cognitive Model is the foundation for Kindred's Colorscapes dementia program and reflects Claudia's belief that assets and limitations must both be recognized. Her work has expanded to include all age groups and any diagnosis that produces a diminished capacity to think.

The Allen Cognitive Network is rapidly expanding its community through global outreach, training and support. Beth looks forward to sharing her knowledge and resources with her amazing team. Congratulations Beth!





# KRISTAL SPURLOCK TAKES THE LEAD

Left to right: Michele Avery and Kristal Spurlock



Congratulations to Kristal Spurlock, PTA at Aberdeen Village, who recently received the “Leadership Award – Outside the Field” award from the Kansas Council of Workforce Education. This award recognizes an individual who has contributed to the field of career and technical education.

Michele Avery, CPTA, is the Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education for Kansas City Kansas Community College. And it was the school’s PTA Program that nominated Kristal for the “Leadership Award – Outside the Field” award.

“Kristal has been a clinical instructor for our PTA program for over 4 years and accepts students at all levels of their study. She has a passion for physical therapy and a caring spirit for

all her patients at Aberdeen Village – and she passes these qualities on to our students who are lucky enough to work with her in their clinical rotations. Kristal is patient with all different learning styles, allowing students to think through the treatment strategies and only giving input when needed,” said Michele.

Kristal accepts several students annually and has been available on an emergency basis for our program. She does all this on a volunteer basis, adding to her already heavy workload. Ultimately, she’s an excellent role model for all our PTA students preparing to enter the profession.

Congratulations and thank you, Kristal, for your commitment to students and clinical education!





# PEDAL TO THE METAL

AT APTA CSM



Every year, thousands of physical therapists and physical therapy assistants from across the country join the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) in their annual Combined Sections Meeting (CSM). This conference provides the opportunity for students and educators to attend guest lectures and forums, discover and learn of new research, attend receptions with alumni from their respective programs, and to network with current PTs, PTAs and employers.

RehabCare and its Student Programs Department attend the APTA CSM every year. And with this year's theme of "Pedal to the Metal!" we were excited to be in Indianapolis, Indiana and take part. With over 6,500 attendees, this opportunity enables us to interact with future PTs and PTAs. More importantly, it allows us to inform students about RehabCare – what we deliver, our different settings, what sets us apart from other employers, and why we are the best at what we do. We also provide students with information about our student internship program, which thousands of students participate in every year.

While the location of the conference changes every year, the conference tends to follow a similar schedule and have the same dynamic. However, RehabCare and the Student Programs Department try to make our booth more interactive and fun. For the first time, this year was a "Green Screen" Photo Booth. Attendees were able to get their photos taken with a RehabCare conference themed background. In addition to our ever-popular T-shirt, attendees were able to take home a copy of their photo – or even email, tweet or post it on Facebook. "It was a lot of fun!" said Lauren Brody-Terrill, Student Programs Manager, of her impressive eighth APTA CSM.

We would also like to thank Barb Wallace, Student Programs Director; Annie Belgeri, Student Programs Manager; Linda Becker, Recruiting Manager; David Wendeborn, PT Director of Clinical Operations; Judy Freyermuth, PT Clinical Specialist; Glenda Mack, PT, DVP Clinical Operations, and to the many volunteers for helping make this event as successful as it was. We're looking forward to next year's APTA CSM in Anaheim, California. Hope to see you there!





## THE ALL-NEW INPATIENT ACUTE CARE REHAB UNIT

JOIN A PASSIONATE TEAM FROM THE START WITH OPPORTUNITIES IN JULY



The Inpatient Acute Care Rehab Team

### OCCUPATIONAL AND PHYSICAL THERAPISTS – GARDEN CITY, KS

#### \$10,000 SIGN ON BONUS

As an Occupational or Physical Therapist at St. Catherine's Hospital in Garden City, Kansas, you'll support both the New Inpatient Acute Rehab and the current Outpatient/Med Surg units. It's an exciting opportunity to work with a team of dedicated healthcare professionals who pride themselves in providing quality resident care.

#### Benefits

This position offers an exceptional pay rate and benefits package, including:

- Medical and Dental Insurance Plans
- Vision Coverage
- Vacation
- Paid Time Off
- 401K
- Continuing Education Opportunities
- Healthcare Flexible Spending Account
- Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account
- Employee and Dependent Life Insurance
- Laser Eye Surgery Discount Plan

#### \$500 in annual Professional Development Funds

It's YOUR choice to use, however you choose.

#### About the Hospital

St. Catherine Hospital was awarded the Advanced Certification for Primary Stroke Center.

"The new accreditation at St. Catherine Hospital demonstrates the facility's commitment to deliver top-notch care to stroke patients," said Chief Medical Officer Matthew Byrnes, M.D.

An exceptional opportunity for New Grads! Contact us today:

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THE FUTURE IS BRIGHT FOR OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY...

## IF YOU WANT IT TO BE

By Arthur Levesque, CP, OTR/L, CLT National OT Clinical Specialist

April is OT Month, and as such, I send my fellow Occupational Therapy practitioners warm and heartfelt congratulations. We are proud members of a profession that continues to promulgate the belief that purposeful activity should play an inherent role in the treatment of our patients. The Occupational Therapy provider has a unique appreciation and understanding of the complexity of life roles, including vocations and avocations, of the individuals whom we treat. We understand the intrinsic values and experiences of our patients and how they impact individual performance, particularly in rehabilitation.

Our strength and value as a profession lies in our ability to tap into the patient's preserved memories, ingrained skill sets, and familiar routines that then become the foundation of occupational therapy plans of care. Our training in task analysis and task adaptation allows us to create patient specific interventions that not only have intrinsic value, but also are goal-oriented and success driven.

One of the most important precepts we subscribe to and are qualified to deliver is the ability to grade purposeful activities to complement the skill level of our patients. In doing so, we stimulate and capitalize on the individual's intrinsic motivation and bring about successful participation in the rehabilitation process. Greater participation in patient-specific activities yields many benefits: patient satisfaction, improved self-esteem, improved self-efficacy, and higher functional outcomes – to name only a few. This is no surprise, as our profession's perspective on the importance of patient psyche and its role in the rehabilitation process has not been lost in today's fast-paced healthcare delivery treadmill.

In the article *OT, More Than Bathing and Dressing* (OT Advance 2012), the author presented the importance of today's clinicians tapping into the full scope of practice that Occupational Therapy embodies. For example, we are uniquely qualified to address the psychosocial needs of patients. Because our profession's roots run deep in this particular area of practice, we are exceptionally qualified to assist the interdisciplinary team in managing maladaptive behaviors that potentially may put both patient and staff at risk. We are educated and trained in assessing the importance of structure, daily routine, and time management of patients suffering from debilitating psychological and/or substance abuse issues. As clinicians, we understand that purposeful engagement in activities throughout the day is vital to one's well being, feeling of self-worth, sense of purpose, and autonomy.

Another significant area of practice for Occupational Therapy is in the realm of Cognitive Rehabilitation. Some of the most noteworthy researchers in this field have been Occupational Therapists. As clinicians, we are trained in providing cognitive evaluations and assessments to ascertain the best methods for successful intervention with our patients. We acknowledge that paper-pencil testing may not always provide a clear picture of the patient's true mentation, so we always strive to incorporate functional activities in treatment to assess cognitive performance. In so doing, we may see deficits that reveal themselves in an in vivo context that may otherwise have remained hidden.

Yet another area of practice that our profession addresses is the needs assessment of patients with impaired visual perceptual skills. Occupational Therapists understand the important roles that vision and perception play in the ability to interact safely and effectively in one's environment. Fully appreciating the assault on the patient's visual perceptual system due to normal aging, ocular pathologies, or a combination of the two, the Occupational Therapy practitioner is versed in providing evaluation and treatment strategies to minimize safety risks while maximizing functional performance. We recognize that often, the caregiver's misinterpretation of the signs and symptoms of visual perceptual impairments may, for example, be incorrectly attributed to dementia. Similarly, a patient who suffers from frequent falls may not be afflicted with biomechanical deficits, but rather, may be succumbing to problems with visual acuity or contrast sensitivity.

Never resting on our laurels, I encourage you, the Occupational Therapy practitioner, to capitalize on your profession's scope of practice. I challenge you to personally explore those areas of occupational therapy practice that you may need to develop or enhance.

So my friends, the world is your oyster. Make the next move to build your clinical repertoire of skills. Celebrate and embrace the full scope of your profession. Show the world what Occupational Therapy is all about. In so doing, I am confident we will not only expand the value of Occupational Therapy, but more importantly, we will add to the betterment of the lives of our patients.

Kudos!  
Arthur

