

## October is National Physical Therapy Month

### CRMC Physical Medicine Offers an Array of Therapy Services

October is National Physical Therapy Month and Cherokee Regional Medical Center's Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Department is proud to offer a full spectrum of Physical, Occupational and Speech Therapy services, as well as Sports Medicine. CRMC's physical therapy team works with every age group from premature babies to the elderly. The CRMC Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Department, offers this wide array of services out of their hospital clinic location and through Cherokee Regional Clinic in Holstein.

In addition to seeing patients in the clinic locations on an outpatient basis, they also work in a variety of off-site settings. These may include patient homes, nursing homes and other long term care facilities, and in-patient areas within the hospital. In some instances they also work directly with businesses to treat injured workers and prevent further injuries.



*The staff of the CRMC Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation Department includes (Front L-R) Lisa Strandberg, PT Tech, Michelle Horton, Clerk, Erin Grant, PT Tech. (Middle L-R) Terri Cullison, PT, Ruth Vetter, OT, Melissa Harder, PTA, Korissa Morton, PTA, (Back L-R) Jean Walker, OT, Jodi Schlichting, LAT, ATC, Benjy Deubner, DPT, Jakob Hummel, DPT, Kayla Koch, DPT, OCS, Department Manager and John Lynch, DPT.*

Some of the many conditions physical therapists treat include: musculoskeletal injuries such as muscle, tendon or ligament tears, strains, sprains, tendonitis and bursitis, and fractures. They also treat pain in backs, necks, shoulders, elbows, wrists, hands, pelvis, hips, knees, ankles and feet.

This traditionally is done through therapeutic exercise, strength and flexibility training, manual therapy, gait training, traction, electrical stimulation, whirlpool, posture evaluation, ultrasound, massage and heat/cold treatments.

In addition, the CRMC Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Department has been using a newer form of treatment called dry needling. Dry needling is a medical treatment which uses a very thin needle without any medication (a dry needle) to achieve its aim. Dry needling has been proven

successful to treat pain and dysfunction caused by muscle problems, headaches, and some nerve problems.

Dry needling works by changing the way your body senses pain (neurological effects) and by helping the body heal stubborn muscle spasms associated with trigger points (myofascial effects). There are additional electrical and chemical changes associated with dry needling therapy, which assists the healing process.

### **Aquatic Therapy**

Aquatic therapy or pool therapy consists of an exercise program that is performed in the water. It is a beneficial form of therapy that is useful for a variety of medical conditions. Aquatic therapy uses the physical properties of the water to assist in patient healing and exercise performance.

One benefit of aquatic therapy is the buoyancy provided by the water. While submerged in the water, buoyancy assists in supporting the weight of the patients. This decreases the amount of weight bearing which reduces the force of stress placed on the joints, allowing patients to move in the pool with less pain. Water also provides assistance and resistance while exercising so that one can progress through various levels of activity while increasing strength to weak and injured muscles. The warmth of the water experienced (96 degrees) during aquatic therapy assists in relaxing muscles and vasodilates vessels, increasing blood flow to injured areas.



*Jakob Hummel, DPT at CRMC, working with Victoria Dilocker in the aquatic therapy pool. Aquatic therapy combines heat, buoyancy and massage to relax your body while providing many benefits. It is commonly used in treatments for sports injuries, occupational injuries, joint conditions and back pain. It can also be helpful for patients recovering from surgery or coping with neurological conditions.*

“I think this Physical Therapy Department is by far one of the best that I have been to. The staff is great and accommodating. They don’t treat you like a patient, but more like a friend. They are great. The pool therapy has helped me so much.”– Victoria Dilocker, CRMC Physical Therapy Patient

## **Sports Medicine**

The CRMC team consists of physical therapists, physical therapy assistants and techs, and a certified athletic trainer. From the collegiate and high school athletes to the weekend warrior, individuals of all ages can benefit from these services.

“We are pleased to work with Jodi Schlichting, ATC, to provide athletic training and physical therapy services to Cherokee and local area athletes,” said Koch. “We never like to see kids get hurt, but when they do, we take pride in helping them return to have success in their respective sports.”

In fact, at the start of this school year, CRMC implemented ImPACT™ testing for Cherokee and MMCRU athletes. ImPACT is a cognitive computerized test that will aid in the assessment and management of concussions. It consists of two components: baseline testing and post-injury testing which are used in conjunction to determine if a patient can safely return to activity.

When necessary, post-injury ImPACT tests will also be administered by Schlichting. She will then reach out to the medical provider on record for each individual athlete for interpretation of the results. In light of the recent changes to return to learn and return play guidelines following a concussion, this is a valuable tool in helping to manage this process for the student athletes and medical providers alike.

The funding for ImPACT will be provided by the CRMC Foundation on an annual basis.

## **Postsurgical Care**

The CRMC Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation staff works closely with on-call orthopedic surgeon Dr. Seth Harrer on total joint cases. This is very important in ensuring successful transitions and continuity of care from the surgeon to the therapy department.

"We have the unique ability to care for our total joint patients prior to surgery, during the surgical hospitalization, and after discharge in the home health or outpatient setting," comments Koch. "Our team works with Dr. Harrer to provide a smooth transition into every phase of rehabilitation. We take pride in providing excellent post-surgical care and are proud of our outcomes with the joint program at CRMC."

If you have any questions, or want to learn more about their services, feel free to contact CRMC Physical Medicine at (712) 225-1502.