



Meet your Rehabilitation Team: Physical, Occupational and Speech Therapy

Most residents in skilled nursing have deficits that may prevent caring for themselves independently. All residents should be allowed the opportunity to complete a task or a portion of a task versus having the task completed for them. Rehabilitation is commonly defined as “restoration to a condition of good health or former capacity through therapy and education.” This resident-centered care affords the opportunity to stay connected in the environment, give a sense of purpose and promote higher self-esteem. Rehab professionals are part of the interdisciplinary team (IDT), a specialized group of highly skilled medical professionals who work together to provide comprehensive and individualized rehabilitative care. Who are the rehab professionals in your facility?

Physical Therapists (PT)

PT focuses on evaluating, diagnosing, and treating disorders of the musculoskeletal system. Any individual who is dealing with illness or injury resulting in pain, decreased range of motion, decreased strength, or impaired ability to perform gross motor skills would benefit from PT services. Specific techniques and strategies used by PTs may include, but are not limited to:

- ❖ Specific exercises to stretch and strengthen muscles as well as to improve posture, balance, and endurance.
- ❖ Use of heat, cold, ultrasound, and electrical stimulation incorporated into treatment sessions.
- ❖ Manual therapy, massage and modalities for pain reduction and functional improvement.
- ❖ Training in the use of assistive devices such as canes and walkers to increase independence.
- ❖ Family training and home exercise program development and training.

Occupational Therapists (OT)

OT is recommended when an individual’s ability to live independently, to care for their personal needs and their ability to participate in community life, work and family is interrupted by physical decline, illness or injury. OT helps people learn or relearn the skills essential to everyday life. Specific techniques and strategies used by OT may include, but are not limited to:



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- ❖ Training in daily living skills such as dressing, eating, safety and home management skills.
- ❖ Recommending exercises to increase upper body strength, flexibility, promote good posture, and enhance flexibility.
- ❖ Instruction on protecting joints and conserving energy.
- ❖ Recommendations and training in the use of adaptive equipment.
- ❖ Performing comprehensive home assessments and making recommendations on necessary adaptations and equipment that may be needed.

Speech Therapy (ST)

ST is often recommended when an individual has difficulty in communicating or understanding others, has difficulty reading or understanding the written word, and/or has problems swallowing food or liquids. A Speech Language Pathologist (SLP) focuses on voice quality, language, cognition, communication, and swallowing disorders. A SLP will provide a comprehensive, individualized evaluation to diagnose a number of disorders and to develop a plan of care that may address any of the following:

- ❖ Slurred or unclear speech that is difficult to understand
- ❖ Difficulty finding words
- ❖ Inability to understand others
- ❖ Changes in voice quality
- ❖ Difficulty in following directions
- ❖ Memory problems
- ❖ Inability to sequence an activity such as dressing
- ❖ Swallowing problems with liquid or food
- ❖ Difficulty hearing or understanding others

The Rehabilitation Team uses a proactive philosophy to support and enhance an individual's highest level of function. The Rehabilitation Team assists each person to progress towards their individualized goals and is there to support them through both their challenges and successes.

For additional information, please contact your Select Rehabilitation Physical, Occupational and Speech therapists.