

# Family Physical Therapy Services, Inc.

## “Our Family Cares”

Cathy J Leer, PT MBA, Owner/Director

603.644.8334

Feb/Mar 2015 Newsletter

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## Do You Know Your Rights?

By Cathy Leer

Did you know that, as a patient, **you have the right to choose your Physical Therapist?** Did you know that you are not obligated to receive treatment from a specific facility recommended by your doctor or doctor's office?

Don't worry if you answered “No” to these questions. You are not alone. Seventy percent of consumers believe that a physician's order or prescription is required in order to see a physical therapist. In fact, all 50 states allow direct access to a physical therapist which means that you **DO NOT NEED A REFERRAL** to be evaluated by a physical therapist, **AND** you have the power to determine which facility is right for you.

What direct access and your right to choose results in:

- Freedom to choose PT's based upon expertise or specialization, experience, location, or value added services;
- Immediate access to a PT for evaluation and diagnosis without waiting for a doctor's appointment;
- Immediate access to treatment;
- Quicker healing;
- Decreased secondary problems associated with delayed treatment;
- Maximization of your insurance benefits based upon deductibles, co-pays, and fee structures.

So now that you are aware of your right to choose, how do you make the decision as to which therapist or facility is right for you, especially if you have no basis for judgment? To better inform your decision, it is important to understand some of the economics of physical therapy and why the norm in patient treatment has developed often to the detriment of your body or wallet.

First, most businesses are governed by the bottom line: Profit. Profit is increased either by volume or by pricing. The more patients that are seen, the more billable treatments there are. The more frequently a patient is seen, the more co-pays are collected. Many insurance companies are transitioning from a “fee-for-service” model (where bills are generated based on what a therapist does with you) to a “fixed-rate” model (the rate of reimbursement is the same regardless of what the therapist does with you or for how long). With a fixed rate of reimbursement per treatment, profit is increased with **more** treatments, not **longer** treatments. Unfortunately, that means there's incentive to provide more treatments to the patient, and hence more co-payments. With co-payments rising sometimes to the \$50 to \$75 range per treatment, this can add up rather quickly.

Another reimbursement consideration to be aware of involves insurance reimbursement to hospital-based outpatient facilities vs. a private PT-owned facility. A hospital-based facility may get paid up to 4 times the amount that a private PT-owned facility gets for the same service. If your insurance benefit for PT is capitated (meaning a limited overall dollar amount), that means the higher costs at a hospital-based facility will eat up your allowed dollar amount 4 times faster than at a private PT-owned clinic. So, not only do you end up paying exorbitant co-pays and deductibles but your PT benefit is effectively one quarter of what it should be if you go to a hospital-based outpatient facility.

### Helping Hands Honoree

Another “Triple H Award” winner!

This month's award goes to Cheryl Renaud! Thank you for spreading the word about Family Physical Therapy Services. As a new patient, Cheryl must have been pleased with her care because she wasted no time in referring a loved one to us. In the process she became our Triple H Award winner for the month of January!

Congratulations Cheryl on being our Triple H Award winner this month and spreading the word about our services. You are a perfect example of a Helping Hands Honoree and now an official part of “our family” at FPTS. We are forever grateful to you for extending a “helping hand”.

Come on by and pick up your gift certificate to Carrabba's Italian Grill!

*continued on page 2*

## What you should look for in a Physical Therapist and Physical Therapy clinic

By Cathy Leer

What to expect from your Physical Therapist:

- Is highly trained and experienced
- Performs a thorough evaluation to identify the source of your symptoms and design a plan of care specific to your needs and goals
- Listens to your concerns and provides educated and easy to understand answers to your questions about your condition or plan of care
- Is both courteous and professional, as is the entire staff
- Includes appropriate home exercises to optimize progress between treatments, maximize the effectiveness of your care and outcome, and transition you to independently manage your condition
- Achieves positive changes or results within 2 weeks. You may not be fully recovered by then, but you should have enough change to indicate that you have the correct plan of care. If changes are not seen, the plan is altered or you are referred to another health care professional who can help you
- Communicates appropriately with your other health care professionals

What to expect from your Physical Therapy clinic:

- Provides staffing levels allowing for dedicated hands-on, one-on-one care
- Schedules duration of appointments to allow your physical therapist to appropriately evaluate you, assess your progress and modify/advance your program
- Schedules you with one primary therapist for the duration of your course of treatment
- Schedules group sessions only when specific to your needs and billed appropriately
- Provides private treatment rooms to assure your privacy and that your physical therapist is devoting 100% attention to you

Other factors to consider when choosing where to receive care:

- Physicians that send you to facilities they own are profiting from the referral and that creates a possible conflict of interest. What are they more concerned with: Their profit or your well-being?
- Physicians who are employees of hospitals are generally “encouraged” to refer to other hospital-owned departments and often times suffer from negative reviews or punishments if they don’t comply (another possible conflict of interest).
- Hospital-owned outpatient facilities are often up to 4 times more expensive than the same services at physical therapist-owned private practices.
- Athletic trainers or new graduates of physical therapist or physical therapist assistant programs either lack the certification or the experience and advanced training that physical therapists with years or decades of experience have. They are less equipped to determine the source of your symptoms, which equates to longer or ineffective terms of care.

Recommendation: Select a privately-owned physical therapy clinic—remove the potential conflict of interest that exists with a physician-owned practice or one that is part of a healthcare network. Select a facility that employs only licensed physical therapists and physical therapy assistants who will work one-on-one with you to perform your physical therapy – not athletic trainers or rehabilitation aides.

Hopefully, you have been able to glean some valuable information from this article to help you make an informed decision on a very important matter... your health and well-being. The “bottom line” for a business may be profit, but your “bottom line” should be who can provide the best care at the best price, in the most expeditious and professional manner and achieve the best outcomes for your recovery. YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO CHOOSE, AND THE CHOICE IS YOURS!

### Do You Know Your Rights? *Continued from page 1*

Profit can also be increased by decreasing the cost of providing the service by employing new physical therapist/physical therapist assistant graduates, athletic trainers, or unskilled rehabilitation aides, all at lower salaries than experienced physical therapists/physical therapist assistants. Unfortunately, this affects your level of care because of the inherent lack of knowledge or experience. The more training and experience your therapist has, the more efficiently and effectively the therapist can target treatment to your specific needs.

On any given day, there are only so many work hours for a particular PT. So, in order to increase revenue generated by that PT, patients are either double-booked with another patient or group of patients, or the duration of treatments are decreased to accommodate more patients. Very often in this type of environment, treatment is left up to the patient to perform independently or under the supervision of an aide or trainer, and even though it should be billed differently it usually isn't. Furthermore, if the patient is completing a task on his/her own, it is usually something that can be done at home as part of a home exercise program. So, why are you doing it in the clinic and getting billed for it? Shouldn't you be receiving care in the form of what you can't do at home??

Family Physical Therapy Services only employs experienced, licensed Physical Therapists or Physical Therapy Assistants. Most of our treatments are performed in private treatment rooms providing services you can't perform adequately by yourself at home. Evaluations are 1 hour and follow-up appointments are typically 30-45 minutes. Like any business, we need to make a profit, though maximizing profit is not our primary motivation—getting you better is.

## Therapeutic Work Solutions Info Corner

# Imagine your life in 5 years if you don't return to work in 6 weeks.

*Can you afford to miss the joys of your family while you sit on the sidelines?*



Delaying a return to work can significantly impact your ability to earn a living and enjoy a happy, healthy and active lifestyle with your family and friends. Research shows that the chances of a worker returning to work after being out 6 weeks compared to being out a year, drops from 50% to 1-2%. So not only will a delay increase costs to the employer, it WILL significantly impact the workers ability to return to work and resume a healthy and productive lifestyle.

If you or someone you know needs clearance in order return to work and get back to living, you might need a Functional Capacity Assessment or Evaluation (FCA/FCE). Unfortunately, the word on the street is that injured workers are waiting up to 6 weeks to have one scheduled. We are also hearing that it takes up to 6 weeks more to receive a final report on the outcome. This could delay a worker's return to work by several months. At an estimated cost of \$500 for every day out of work, and an average of 3 additional months wait time, that can add up to an additional indirect cost to a business of over \$30,000! It can also impact the chances for you to be a healthy, active, and vibrant, worker and provider for your family.

Can your employer afford that? Can YOU afford to be out of work any longer than is necessary or miss out on activities with your friends or family?

Therapeutic Work Solutions, our Industrial Rehabilitation Division, can help you recover from your injury and restore your healthy lifestyle. Don't settle for a future of pain and inability to earn a living or enjoy a healthy and loving relationship with your family and friends.

At TWS, scheduling opportunities are within 1 to 2 weeks, often times within 1 or 2 days. Our reports are completed within 1 week.

**Why wait? Schedule your FCE/FCA with us today! Call 644.8334**

## Patient of the Month

By Linda Kemper

[I think it's fair to say] I'm a success story in progress. I have been working with Kelley, a terrific trainer at Elite Personal Training and Fitness, for several years and two years ago I began having shoulder pain. After trips to the orthopedist and several physical therapists, the pain would subside and then return. There seemed to be no definite diagnosis.

Luckily, last fall, Dan from FPTS, began visiting Elite to help clients there who might benefit from PT tips to improve their health. I was fortunate to meet with him and he identified needs for the shoulder and hip. Thanks to Dan's diligence and concern, I made an appointment, began seeing Tom at FPTS, and have been working on both the shoulder and hip over the past few months.

My experience with FPTS has been terrific. Lisa made me feel right at home as she scheduled me for appointments and Tom has been fantastic. He really listens and respects his patients. He is, obviously, very knowledgeable and has explained carefully to me what he believes the problems are and how we will approach alleviating the pain and increasing mobility. Every session has been helpful to me, whether it involves targeted exercises to address my particular needs or conversations that educate me about the workings of the muscles in the body. I really appreciate his patience, his knowledge, his dedication, and his determination to help this patient improve her quality of life. Now, I am not only able to get more out of my workouts but also able to do things I wasn't able to before.

I am still in therapy and making good progress. My shoulder pain is gone most of the time and my mobility is greatly improved. We continue to see gains in the hip area and I believe with Tom's expertise, my "sticking with the program" (doing my PT exercises regularly), and Kelley supporting my PT program at Elite I will continue to progress and feel even better than I do now!

Thanks Tom, Kelley, Dan, and all the supportive people at FPTS.

Elite Personal Training and Fitness has two locations—in Manchester and Bedford.

### ***FPTS Community Presentations***

Dan Baram, PTA, CSCS, presented: Minimal Shoes = Maximum Body: Using Shoes and Proper Exercises to Maximize Performance and Minimize Injuries at Runner's Alley in Concord on January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2015. If you would like to see his presentation including specific exercises, view RUNNERS ALLEY 1/8/2015 at: [www.healthandfitmechanic.com](http://www.healthandfitmechanic.com)

Steve Lisowe, PT, presented: Functional Capacity Testing – A Physical Therapist's Perspective to the Case Management Society of New England at the Manchester Country Club on January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2015.

Hats off to Steve. He received 100% top ratings in the areas of presentation, subject knowledge, quality of material, and delivery of material. Comments included: "Excellent program" and the "presenter was exceptional."

If you, your company, or organization is interested in any of our programs or presentations or would like us to design one for you, please contact our office and let us know what you are interested in. We would be happy to make arrangements. 644.8334

# Family Physical Therapy Services, Inc.

Bedford, NH 03110 Chichester, NH 03258  
644.8334 961.0039  
www.familyptservices.com



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DETERMINE **YOUR** DESTINY. CHOOSE **EXCELLENCE.**

## **THREE IMPORTANT THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT PT**

- ✓ **YOU** HAVE THE RIGHT TO CHOOSE YOUR FACILITY
- ✓ **YOU** DON'T NEED A PHYSICIAN'S REFERRAL\*
- ✓ **PASSION** AND COMMITMENT CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

If you are starting a program to promote health and wellness and want to prevent injuries, have a recent injury and need PT, or are unhappy with your current PT or facility, we can help.

**Check out this month's issue to learn how to optimize your results in PT and learn how to switch for free**

\*Dependent upon your particular insurance coverage. Call for details.

# 7 Myths about Physical Therapy

(APTA, MoveForwardPT.com)

People everywhere are experiencing the transformative effect physical therapy can have on their daily lives. In fact, as experts in the way the body moves, physical therapists help people of all ages and abilities reduce pain, improve or restore mobility, and stay active and fit throughout life. But there are some common misconceptions that often discourage people from visiting a physical therapist.

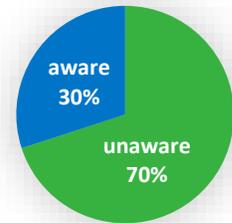
**It's time to debunk 7 common myths about physical therapy:**

## 1. Myth: I need a referral to see a physical therapist.

**Fact:** A recent survey by the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) revealed 70% of people think a referral or prescription is required for evaluation by a physical therapist. However, all 50 states and the District of Columbia (DC) allow patients to be evaluated and allow for some form of treatment or intervention without a physician referral or prescription. In NH, a physical therapist shall refer a patient or client to appropriate health care practitioners when:

- The PT has reasonable cause to believe symptoms or conditions are present that require services beyond the scope of practice; or
- Physical therapy is contraindicated; or
- There is no documented improvement within 25 calendar days of initiation of treatment.

Consumer Awareness of "Direct Access"



## 2. Myth: Physical therapy is painful.



**Fact:** Physical therapists seek to minimize your pain and discomfort—including chronic or long-term pain. They work within your pain threshold to help you heal, and restore movement and function. The survey found that although 71% of people who have never visited a physical therapist think physical therapy is painful, that number significantly decreases among patients who have seen a physical therapist in the past year.

## 3. Myth: Physical therapy is only for injuries and accidents.

**Fact:** Physical therapy helps prevent injury and pain, and promotes mobility, health, and wellness. Physical Therapists are skilled at evaluating and **diagnosing potential problems before they lead to more serious injuries or disabling conditions.**—from carpal tunnel syndrome and frozen shoulder, to chronic headaches and lower back pain, to name a few.

## 4. Myth: Any health care professional can perform physical therapy.

**Fact:** Although 42% of consumers know that physical therapy can only be performed by a licensed physical therapist, 37% still believe other health care professionals can also administer physical therapy. Many physical therapists also pursue board certification in specific areas such as neurology, orthopedics, sports, or women's health, for example.

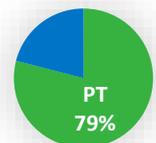
## 5. Myth: Physical therapy isn't covered by insurance.



**Fact:** Most insurance policies cover some form of physical therapy. Beyond insurance coverage, physical therapy has proven to reduce costs by helping people avoid unnecessary imaging scans, surgery, or prescription drugs. **Physical therapy can also lower costs** by helping patients avoid falls or by addressing conditions before they become chronic.

## 6. Myth: Surgery is my only option.

**Fact:** In many cases, **physical therapy has been shown to be as effective as surgery** in treating a wide range of conditions—from rotator cuff tears and degenerative disk disease, to meniscal tears and some forms of knee osteoarthritis. Those who have recently seen a physical therapist know this to be true, **with 79% believing physical therapy can provide an alternative to surgery.**



## 7. Myth: I can do physical therapy myself.

**Fact:** Your participation is key to a successful treatment plan, but every patient still needs the expert care and guidance of a licensed physical therapist. Your therapist will leverage his or her specialized education, clinical expertise, and the latest available evidence to evaluate your needs and make a diagnosis before creating an individualized plan of care.



*“Excellence is never an accident. It is always the result of high intention, sincere effort, and intelligent execution; it represents the wise choice of many alternatives - choice, not chance, determines your destiny.” - Aristotle*

## **IF YOUR ANSWER IS YES TO ANY OF THESE QUESTIONS, THEN IT'S TIME TO DETERMINE YOUR DESTINY.**

**ARE** YOU UNHAPPY WITH YOUR CURRENT PHYSICAL THERAPY?

**ARE** YOU HAVING TROUBLE SCHEDULING YOUR VISITS?

**ARE** YOU ON A WAITING LIST FOR TREATMENT?

**IS** YOUR PHYSICAL THERAPIST IN AN INCONVENIENT LOCATION?

**WERE** YOU TOLD WHERE TO RECEIVE YOUR PHYSICAL THERAPY?

**DO** YOU FEEL LIKE YOU ARE BEING IGNORED BY YOUR PHYSICAL THERAPIST?

**ARE** YOU QUESTIONING THE LEVEL OF EXPERIENCE OR EXPERTISE YOUR PHYSICAL THERAPIST HAS?

**ARE** YOU IN PAIN AFTER YOUR PHYSICAL THERAPY?

**ARE** YOU DISAPPOINTED IN THE RESULTS THAT YOU ARE GETTING?

**DOES** YOUR CURRENT PHYSICAL THERAPIST WORK WITH MORE THAN ONE PATIENT AT A TIME?

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**SWITCH FOR FREE**

**CALL 644.8334**

If you answered **YES** to any of the above questions then don't waste another precious minute of your time or another penny of your hard earned money. Call **FAMILY PHYSICAL THERAPY SERVICES** now.

**DETERMINE YOUR DESTINY. CHOOSE EXCELLENCE.**

**THIS COUPON MAY BE GIVEN TO FRIENDS AND FAMILY LIMITED TO THE FIRST 20 CALLERS**

**OFFER EXPIRES MARCH 31, 2015 CALL FOR DETAILS. LIMITATIONS APPLY**

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