WHAT'S THE DEAL WITH PHYSICAL THERAPIST RESIDENCY PROGRAMS?: CURRENT RESIDENTS' PERSPECTIVES

Brooke McVeigh of Evidence In Motion

If you haven't already noticed, education for the physical therapy profession continues to advance. In alignment with APTA's Vision 2020 (that physical therapy will be provided by doctors of physical therapy), clinical residency programs are being encouraged for those seeking further advancement as well-rounded physical therapists. Evidence In Motion (EIM), one of the 42 APTA-credentialed residency programs and home of the largest residency program in the US, has some insight from current residents about this trend. This is part one of a two-part series, highlighting questions and answers from some of our current residents. This month, we highlight Chris Stanley who has a bachelor's degree in exercise sport science and a Master of Science in Physical Therapy from Texas State University. Chris began the program in January 2008.

What is the most valuable lesson you have gained in the clinical residency program?

Chris: "For years the techniques and patient management approaches that PTs have used have been mostly derived from 'clinical experience,' with little standardization of care between physical therapists. Ten different PTs may manage the same disorder in multiple ways, whereas in the clinical residency, we work to apply the evidence in the literature to validate and standardize physical therapy care. Very important!"

What is the most challenging aspect of the clinical residency?

Chris: "The most challenging aspect of the residency is the time involved. Residency programs are more advanced and therefore intended to be difficult and challenging, and time management has proven to be the most challenging for me and many of my fellow residents."

Is it worth the extra time and expense to participate in a clinical residency program?

Chris: "Absolutely! It's been less than two years since I graduated from my physical therapist program, so I still consider myself a recent graduate. As a result of the residency program, I believe that I am practicing physical therapy with the same or higher confidence than a physical therapist with more years of experience. The residency has also armed me with the information needed to successfully interact with and demonstrate to physicians that we possess the expertise needed to address musculoskeletal disorders."

Would you recommend participation in a clinical residency program to other PTs?

Chris: "I would recommend this residency to every orthopedic PT without hesitation. This residency program is based on the strongest evidence available and also teaches you how to continue to find and update your own practice as the newest evidence becomes available. This is where the future of physical therapy is headed—toward evidence-based practice. PTs need to learn how to find and interpret the evidence to remain contemporary with the demands of clinical practice and patients."

For more perspectives on clinical residency programs, look for Part II of EIM's resident perspective in next month's *Pulse*.

Check out **www.apta.org/rfprograms** for more information about residency programs and a complete list of APTA-credentialed residency programs. For more information on the EIM residency program, go to **www.evidenceinmotion.com**.

APTA.ORG CARD SORT PROJECT: COLLABORATING TO IMPROVE AND ENHANCE THE APTA WEB SITE

As users of our Web site, **www.apta.org**, you are invited to participate in a sorting exercise designed to make the site architecture more user-friendly.

There are two ways to conduct the search:

Online Sort: Follow this link to conduct an online sort. Be sure to read the provided instructions before you begin. Allow 45-60 minutes to complete the exercise, though some will finish in less time. For best results, APTA asks users to gather around a computer and conduct the exercise as a group. However, individual results are accepted.

Live (Offline) Sort: Sorts produce best results when conducted as group exercises. Participants can conduct a traditional sorting exercise by following the instructions below.

Click here for more information.

Deadline: April 17. (Earlier submissions appreciated.)