



New Requirements Bring New Policies

Over the last couple of years, there have been an increasing number of clinical sites requiring criminal background checks for physical therapy students prior to commencement of their clinical internships. The primary reason for this growing requirement stems from JCAHO's requirement that accredited facilities apply to students and volunteers the same screening requirements that are applied to new employees. For some time many facilities that serve primarily the pediatric and geriatric populations have had a requirement for criminal background checks based on other local, state, or federal regulations related to working with these special populations.

Currently, there does not exist a standard way of dealing with this issue contractually. Clinical sites vary widely as to the extent of the criminal background check required, the time frame in which it must be conducted, who will cover the costs, who will receive and interpret the results, and who will retain and secure the information. Indeed, some sites do not have a coherent policy stating what constitutes a failed background check preferring to rule on each check on a case by case basis. Further complicating this issue for the School is a ruling from the Attorney General of the State of Maryland which effectively prevents

State agencies, which includes the School, from receiving, interpreting, or storing criminal background check information.

In response to this growing requirement, the Clinical Education Office meet with representatives from all of the professional schools on campus and the School of Medicine's legal counselor to look for plausible solutions. Adhering to the Attorney General's ruling, the following position came out of this meeting. In situations where the clinical site requires a criminal background check but will not conduct it or pay for it, the student will be responsible for obtaining and paying for the check from a third party provider. The results of the check will be given to the student or sent directly to the clinical site and not shared with the School. And, the Clinical Education Office will provide the student with a list of agencies from whom they can obtain a check.

Taking a pro-active stance, the School is considering adding a criminal background requirement to all future clinical site contracts and requiring all students to obtain a criminal background check prior to commencing their internships. This would be a step toward standardizing the process and eliminating unpredictable last minute changes in requirements from clinical sites.

New Staff



The Clinical Education Program welcomes Karen Gordes, PT, DScPT. See page 3

Addition To The Clinical Education Staff



Joining the department last June, Karen Gordes is an Assistant Professor and Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education at the Department of Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation Science. Dr. Gordes graduated with a Master's degree in physical therapy in 1998 and was awarded a Doctor of Science in Physical Therapy in 2003, both from the University of Maryland. Her experience includes clinical practice and academic instruction in the area of orthopedics. Dr. Gordes participated in the development of an Interdisciplinary Education program funded by the Health Resources and Services Administration. She participated in research projects as a clinical examiner for the Maryland Center of MS as well as within the UMB PT department. Dr. Gordes recently served as an item writer for the National Physical Therapy Licensure Exam.

In her new role as ACCE, Dr. Gordes will act as block leader, which is the primary point of contact, for both Fall and Spring part time clinical affiliations. She will also assist in the coordination of full time clinical internships.

"The past six months have been an exhilarating time of learning for me," she says. "I look forward to meeting and working with more of our clinical staff affiliates in the year to come."

Strategic Planning Yields New Mission

Over the past year, the Department has worked to create a new Strategic Plan. The plan, designed to guide us into the year 2011, focuses on research, education, and service and embraces the revised Mission Statement presented here.

Mission: *To advance and advocate societal health by optimizing human performance and wellness through research, education, and service in physical therapy and rehabilitation science.*

More Clinical Affiliations

The Clinical Education program continues to add new sites to its extensive list of facilities available for student internships. In the past year, the following clinical sites either joined us as new Clinical Affiliates or renewed long standing commitments to the Department. We thank them for serving as our partner in the education and training of student physical therapists:

*Adventist Rehab / Adventist HealthCare
Annapolis Family PT
Baltimore Sports Rehabilitation
and Physical Therapy
Beebe Medical Center
Broadmeadow HealthCare
Care Resources
Cayuga Medical Center Physical Therapy and
Sports Medicine
Children's Hospital of Philadelphia
Children's Hospital of The King's Daughters
Doctor's Community Hospital
Fitness Forum
Florida Fitness and Rehabilitation
Glade Valley Nursing and Rehabilitation Center
HealthONE*

*Johns Hopkins Hospital
Kennedy Krieger Institute
Kernan Hospital
Lee Memorial Health System
Montgomery Regional Hospital
MZ Physical Therapy
Peninsula Regional Medical Center
Physiotherapy Associates
Rapid Rehabilitation
Riderwood Village, Inc.
Rockingham Memorial Hospital
Scottsdale HealthCare
Sports and Orthopaedic Therapy Services
St Jude Medical Center
Towson Sports Medicine*

Please let us know if we inadvertently forgot to mention your site as a new clinical affiliate!

Golf Tournament Fundraiser

Each year, physical therapy students across the country participate in the Pittsburgh-Marquette Challenge, a grassroots fundraising effort to raise money for the research conducted at the Foundation for Physical Therapy. In the past, the physical therapy students at the University of Maryland have raised an impressive amount of money and last year they raised over \$9000. This year's class hopes to surpass that amount, but they need your help.

In an effort to raise money and have some fun, students from the Class of 2009 are planning a golf tournament in Middletown, MD where participants from throughout the Baltimore and DC area can play for special prizes. Hollow Creek Golf Club, nestled in historic Middletown Valley, boasts a challenging 18-hole golf course. The scenic, par 72 course, amid rolling hills, features water obstacles, target golf shots, out-of-bounds, and hazards on almost every hole.

The tournament, which the students have dubbed "The PT Classic Best Ball Tournament", will be held Saturday, April 5th, beginning with a continental breakfast at 8am and tee-off set for 9 o'clock. Participants not only receive breakfast, but a BBQ lunch buffet and unlimited water, beer, and soft drinks. Green fees and cart fees are also included in the registration fee of \$120 per person or \$440 for a team.

Organizers point out that the fundraiser is an excellent opportunity for companies in the area to advertise by donating prizes or other small items for "goody bags" to be distributed at the event.

To register, or for more information on sponsorship opportunities, please contact Stacie Stephenson via email at ssstep001@umaryland.edu or Megan Fahler at mdoeh001@umaryland.edu

Part Time Affiliations Schedule Changes

We would like to thank our clinical site affiliates for taking time to complete the survey distributed last fall regarding the timing of part time affiliations. Based on feedback from students, clinical instructors and clinical sites, we have changed the organization of our part time affiliations. Starting in the Fall of 2008, students will attend part time affiliations one full-day per week on Wednesdays. Both part time affiliation I and II will run for a total of eight weeks. Students will participate in two half-day Clinical Education seminars during each part-time affiliation for integration of clinical & didactic topics. The half-day seminars will be held at the University, with one in the 5th week of the block and the final one following the last week of the clinical affiliation. Opportunities will be available for clinical staff to participate in panel discussions during the half-day clinical education seminars. We believe the new affiliation structure has many advantages for students and clinical faculty and will further our ongoing pursuit of increasing clinical educational experiences both in quality and quantity. We appreciate all of the efforts put forth by our clinical partners and look forward to working with you during this upcoming transition.

Career Day Moving to Later in the Year



Third-year student Michael Hawkins greets an exhibitor.

2008 will see not one, but two events devoted to assisting graduating students with taking their first steps into the working world. In October, the Class of 2009 will benefit from having a Career Day that is incorporated into National Physical Therapy Month.

This past January, nearly 60 potential employers were introduced to Physical Therapy students from The University of Maryland's campuses in Baltimore and at the Eastern Shore who are scheduled to graduate in May of this year. The highly successful event, hosted by the Clinical Education Program and attended by more than 75 students, included a panel discussion and numerous networking opportunities to the mutual advantage of the students and the employers.



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Mark Your Calendar!

Don't Miss These Important Dates!

Saturday, March 8 8:30am – 12:30pm
PTRS Spring Open House for prospective Students

Saturday, April 5 8am—6pm
PT Classic Golf Tournament
(All proceeds benefit the
Foundation For Physical Therapy)

Friday, April 25 3pm—4pm
Class of 2010 Pinning Ceremony

Friday, May 9
Research Day

Friday, May 16
Class of 2007 Graduation

For more information on these offerings, please refer to the Department's Website:
<http://pt.umaryland.edu/>

