A Well-rounded Foundation

Melinda Gross, PT, DPT, CLT, shares her experience of participating in the 2015-2016 cycle of the Women’s Health Residency program at Good Shepherd Penn Partners. Melinda received her Doctor of Physical Therapy degree from Thomas Jefferson University in 2015. She is a certified lymphedema therapist, with her clinical focus is in treatment of pelvic dysfunction, hip and low back dysfunction, lymphedema, and rehabilitation after cancer treatment.

The Women’s Health Residency program at Good Shepherd Penn Partners is structured to provide a solid foundation in orthopaedics and pelvic health, in addition to providing specialized clinical training focusing around lymphedema and cancer rehabilitation. Throughout the program, I was provided the opportunity to take part in up-to-date didactic learning, diverse mentorship experiences, in addition to having the ability to shadow referring physicians. At the beginning of the residency program, I worked with the orthopedic team, ensuring a strong foundation in advanced theory and practice of lumbopelvic orthopedic physical therapy. The second phase had me transition to didactic education and clinical mentorship for more focused pelvic diagnoses, including pelvic pain, incontinence, constipation, pelvic organ prolapses, and pregnancy-related lumbopelvic dysfunction.

Throughout the year-long residency, I received one-on-one mentoring with ten clinicians throughout Good Shepherd Penn Partners. Time spent with each mentor provided me the ability to practice manual skills, problem solve complex patient cases, and work directly with patients. Each mentor brings their unique style to evidence-based patient care and shows dedication to resident learning. By the end of the 50-week program, I was trained in lymphedema therapy and cancer rehabilitation under the mentorship of some of the most experienced and knowledgeable clinicians in the region.
To be successful during the residency program and maximize the benefits of being part of this prestigious program, time management, self-motivation, and a willingness to seek and implement feedback are required. In turn, I am prepared to apply and sit for the American Board of Physical Therapy Specialties (ABPTS) clinical specialist certification in Women’s Health. Because of the well-rounded foundation provided through participating in this residency program, I am now prepared to treat complex women’s health cases through an evidence-based approach that allows for growth of knowledge and skills consistent with the growing and evolving field of Women’s Health.

Join our Pelvic Floor and Lymphedema teams to work in a stimulating environment as you gain advanced knowledge and skills in Women’s Health Physical Therapy. Currently there are only 244 accredited programs in the United States. Good Shepherd Penn Partner’s Women’s Health Residency Program is only the ninth such program in the entire nation to meet the high accreditation standards. Applications are due by February 28 annually, and can be submitted online. To learn more about our outpatient residency programs and to submit an application online, visit our website www.pennpartners.org/residencies.