Rehab conference objectives 2026:

“Idiopathic Toe Walking and Cranial Remolding Orthoses” presented by Lauren Gatling, MS, CPO and Kaddie Surratt, MPO, CPO

Objectives:

1. Describe clinical presentation of patients with idiopathic toe walking and what potential orthotic interventions may be employed to assist in the treatment of this condition
2. Describe conditions that may be treated with Cranial Remolding Orthoses (CROs).
3. Describe therapeutic protocols and documentation requirements along with prescription criteria for patients treated with CROs
4. List the various types of CROs and the advantages / disadvantages of each
5. Describe specialized terminal devices for upper extremity prosthetic users wishing to engage in avocational activities including sports and recreation.
6. List and describe some prosthetic options for lower extremity prosthetic users who desire to begin or resume sports and avocational recreation.

“Beyond the Diagnosis: Mental Health and Motivation in Rehabilitation” presented by Lauren Carter, MSN, RN, PMHNP-BC

Objectives:

1. Delineate Psychiatric from Medical or Behavioral symptoms
2. Describe Motivation Interviewing and Change Talk
3. Describe How Physical, Occupational, and Speech Therapy can Improve Mental Health

“How the Radiological Interpretation Transfers to Patient Assessment and Treatment” presented by Lori Forrestor, MSN, RN, AG-ACNP-BC, RNFA, ANVP-BC

1. Define and interpret common radiological terms used in imaging reports relevant to physical and occupational therapy practice
2. Identify key radiographic findings and explain their clinical significance in patient evaluation and treatment planning
3. Correlate radiological findings with appropriate surgical procedures and understanding how surgical decisions impact rehabilitation progression
4. Analyze patient complaints and clinical presentation to determine whether symptoms align with imaging findings
5. Integrate radiological information into comprehensive patient assessment, enhancing clinical reasoning and differential diagnosis
6. Apply imaging findings to PT/OT treatment planning, including precautions, contraindications, and progression of care
7. Describe common fracture types and their implications for rehabilitation interventions
8. Determine appropriate bracing considerations based on fracture type, surgical status, and radiographic findings
9. Establish safe activity recommendations and progression guidelines informed by imaging results, healing timelines, and physician orders

Bridging Orthopedics and Early Rehabilitation: Upper Extremity Best Practices presented by Dillon Pittman, MSOT, OTR/L, CSRS

After completing this course, participants will be able to:

1. Identify key anatomical and biomechanical considerations pertinent to early rehabilitative management of upper extremity orthopedic conditions.
2. Differentiate appropriate precautions, contraindications, and progression principles for common upper extremity orthopedic diagnoses encountered in acute, inpatient, and home health settings.
3. Apply evidence-informed manual therapy, positioning, and splinting strategies to support tissue healing and functional recovery in early rehab while maintaining any necessary precautions.
4. Select appropriate therapeutic exercises and activities based on healing phase, surgical status, and functional demands.
5. Develop safe and effective home exercise programs for patients with upper extremity orthopedic conditions transitioning from early rehab settings.
6. Integrate orthopedic best practices into treatment planning for patients with complex diagnoses, including neurologic and multi-trauma presentations.

"Normal Aging, Mild Cognitive Impairment, and Dementia: Clinical Recognition and Best Practice" presented by Lucas McElwain, MD HMDC

After participating in this educational activity, learners will be able to:

1. Distinguish normal aging from MCI and dementia towards earlier detection
2. Practice confidently answering common patient and family questions about cognitive impairment and Alzheimer's Disease (AD)
3. Describe up-to-date testing and treatment of (AD)
4. Describe best practices for cognitive health
5. Describe the role of team-based approach to care for patients with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ADRD)

"Nutrition Implications in the Therapy Setting" presented by Emily Littlejohn, MS, RD, LD

After participating in this educational activity, learners will:

1. Explain the role and importance of nutrition in the rehabilitation setting for children, active and aging adults, older adults and recovery outcomes.
2. Identify key macronutrient needs (energy, protein, carbohydrates, fats) in picky eating, restricted eating and recovery.
3. Recognize essential micronutrients and hydration needs that support musculoskeletal health and healing through the ages and stages of life.
4. Apply practical nutrition strategies to support patients through stages of life – peds, adulthood and older adults.
5. Determine when referral to a registered dietitian is appropriate.

"What we did Wrong, What we are doing Right, What we can do Better: A Dysphagia Discussion and Lab" presented by Keri Alexander, MS CCC-SLP and Jamie Hawkins, MS CCC-SLP

After participating in this educational activity, learners will be able to:

1. Identify the risks of "strict NPO" and the role of SLPs in educating other staff on the risks.
2. Identify appropriate, evidence-based, cost-effective training to further advance knowledge.
3. Describe ways to predict the incidence of aspiration pneumonia in patients with dysphagia.
4. Describe importance of informed consent and involving patients and families in clinical decisions.
5. Identify oral and pharyngeal swallow deficits on VFSS and FEES and create a treatment plan.
6. Describe and demonstrate use of evidence-based exercises for oral and pharyngeal dysphagia in older adults.

"The Medical Ethics of Receptor Dynamics" presented by Brent Boyett DMD, DO, DFASAM

After participating in this educational activity, learners will be able to:

1. Describe the four core principles of medical ethics (autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence, and justice) and apply them to clinical decision-making involving short-term versus long-term risk–benefit considerations in pharmacologic therapy.
2. Explain the molecular biology and receptor dynamics underlying Opponent Process Theory, as proposed by Solomon and Corbit (1974), and analyze how adaptive neurobiological responses influence tolerance, dependence, and clinical outcomes over time.
3. Identify the molecular mechanisms responsible for opioid-induced hyperalgesia and evaluate its clinical consequences, including implications for ethical prescribing, pain management strategies, and patient safety.

"Pulmonary and ICU Considerations for Physical and Occupational therapy" presented by Kevin Harbour, MD

After participating in this educational activity, learners will be able to:

1. Describe common pulmonary and ICU related conditions and their impact on patient function and rehabilitation outcomes in acute care settings.
2. Explain the role of physical and Occupational therapy in the ICU, including safety considerations, monitoring of vital signs, lines and ventilatory support.
3. Identify indications and contraindications for therapy interventions in patients with pulmonary compromise or critical illness.
4. Demonstrate critical decision-making for early mobility in the ICU, including examples such as walking ICU patients and implementing early mobility protocols.
5. Apply evidence-based strategies to improve functional outcomes, prevent deconditioning, and reduce ICU acquired weakness through therapeutic intervention.
6. Describe effective collaboration with interdisciplinary ICU team to support patient safety, optimize mobility progression, and facilitate discharge planning.