



REHABILITATION SERVICES



Getting Accredited where Credit is Due

CARF accreditation isn't a requirement for a rehab organization, but for the Tampa General Rehabilitation Hospital (TGRH) team, it's a given that going above and beyond is part of the job. CARF (Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities) is the gold standard of best practices for rehabilitation services,

and it's part of what makes the TGRH the provider of choice for community members, providers, insurers, and a host of other stakeholders.

The team at TGRH recently obtained a three-year accreditation, not only for its CIIRP (Comprehensive Integrated Inpatient Rehabilitation Program), but also for Stroke and Brain Injury Programs, which sets the institution apart from others. "The three accreditations include more than 2,000 standards, an on-site visit from the organization, interviews with patients, and a lot of paperwork, and it's worth it," said Jennifer Carotenuto, Director of Therapy Services at Tampa General Rehabilitation Hospital. "We choose to do this because we have unparalleled

"We choose to do this because we have unparalleled expectations" expectations, and we want the community to understand that patients, their family members, and referring doctors see these accreditations and understand that we are living a specific set of high standards on a daily basis."

TGRH was also designated one of the best physical rehabilitation centers in 2024 by Newsweek for its care of patients with Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI).

Christmas in July: Sun, Sand, and Santa Support Pediatric Rehab Patients!

TGH's Pediatric Rehab's flagship holiday event in December, the Pediatric Reindeer Reunion, has been a tremendous success for almost two decades. But this year, TGH decided to spread the love – and some holiday cheer – throughout the year! Enter the first "Tis the Sea-son" Pediatric Rehab summer celebration – a more compact version of the annual December extravaganza.

Approximately 60 to 70 former rehab patients, their families, medical team, therapists, Child Life Specialists, and other rehab team members gathered to celebrate the remarkable progress of TGH's pediatric rehab patients. Guests connected with each other to provide the unique support necessary for children and families who find themselves in the position of needing pediatric rehab services.

The inaugural Tis the Sea-son event also served as an introduction to our newly formed family support group, which we started as an extension

of our program to connect patients and families together that have had similar experiences and are navigating similar obstacles and challenges. Parent Jenny Rogers shared the story of her son, Sheldyn, who was a patient in the rehab program in fall 2022, and the inspiring journey her family took on the path to wellness. The event also included fun activities, adapted when necessary for the unique needs of these families, including face painting, games, crafts, food, a special summer visit from Santa,



The Pediatric Rehab team celebrated Christmas in July with patients and their families.

and, of course, Belle and Millie, TGH's resident pediatric facility dogs.

"These events are also important for our dedicated team, who are with these patients during some of the hardest moments on their journey," said Tim Hill, Manager, Pediatric Rehabilitation & Child Life Services. "It's great for our team members to see happy children take the opportunity to just be kids, and to take a moment to pause and reflect on the importance of the work we do."

TGH Team Brings Acute and Critical Care Occupational Therapy Fellowship to Hospital

In May 2022, Occupational Therapist (OT) Jacqueline (Jackie) Collier began the journey developing an Acute and Critical Care Occupational Therapy Fellowship Program that would be accredited by the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA). It would provide a paid position and offer a significant amount of mentorship to post-graduate, licensed OT candidates.

Given the nature of patients that Tampa General cares for, Jackie was specifically interested in developing an acute and critical care OT fellowship program. In her research, she discovered that there were only a handful of academic medical centers in the U.S. that offered such a focus.

In January 2023, she began working in earnest with team Occupational Therapist Chelsea Watts to develop an OT fellowship that met AOTA's criteria. They submitted for candidacy in spring 2024 and learned in August that AOTA had approved the candidacy phase of the fellowship program.

Applications will open in February 2025 and by August Tampa General will welcome their first two OT fellows to a 53-week program.

"What's unique about this program is that we are a Level 1 Trauma Center, so you will see critically ill patients, and that gives our fellows the opportunity to get excellent experience," Chelsea said.

Jackie and Chelsea expect that AOTA will grant full accreditation by 2026, at which time Tampa General will offer one of less than 10 accredited Acute and Critical Care Occupational Therapy Fellowship programs in the country, and the only one in Florida.

"We're an academic teaching hospital, and we're so fortunate to be part of an organization that not only believes in these programs, but funds them," Jackie said. "Onboarding the next generation of acute and critical care occupational therapists is central to our mission of bringing the best health care possible to our patient population."

In addition to co-coordinators Jackie and Chelsea, this team effort includes fellowship mentors and Tampa General team members Katherine Chinnici, Meredith Ciaravino, Jessica Clauson, Traci Hillring, Chelsea Lincoln, Kayla Riegel, and Bobbie Simon.

Pediatric Rehab Gym Gets a Dynamic Glow-Up!

The Muma Children's Hospital at TGH is currently undergoing an extensive, world-class renovation, including a spectacular glow-up for the pediatric rehab gym! With the completion of Phase 1, the Pediatric Therapy team moved into its new gym location, where children and young adults receive physical, occupational and speech therapy. The dedicated space enables a range of services to support fine and gross motor skills, the key functional abilities needed to complete the activities of daily living, cognition, communication and more.

"Our continued commitment to providing unparalleled pediatric care is exemplified by the updates to the pediatric gym, which include a stateof-the-art facility to support the rehabilitation and recovery process," said Melissa Golombek, former vice president of Muma Children's Hospital at TGH and the TGH Women's Institute, now serving as the current TGH chief operating officer. "Providing the latest in therapeutic equipment in a supportive atmosphere embodies our unwavering dedication to advancing pediatric medicine and delivering innovative, compassionate care."

With the renovations, the rehab gym has expanded substantially. The space previously consisted of a single, hospital-sized room. The small size only allowed for limited equipment, restricting the efficiency and scope of possible therapy.

The new space is colorful and bright and allows patients to thrive within the all-important adaptive nature of pediatric rehab therapy. Almost three times

larger, there are areas for individual treatment as well as expansive spaces for open movement. It contains new, state-of-the-art equipment, much of which can be scaled to fit patients ranging from toddlers to growing adolescents — a critical component for a pediatric unit rehab!

The new equipment includes:

- An interactive projector on the floor/wall to envelop patients in a scene, such as a soccer field or other interactive games to get kids moving
- An electric bariatric mat that helps mobilize pediatric patients of all sizes
- A new walking track, including a ceiling-mounted harness for dynamic gait training
- Large parallel bars that can be sized to patient age and ability
- Multiple types of swings to build muscle tone and support sensory therapy

"This expanded facility has been a game changer," said Tim Hill, Manager, Pediatric Rehabilitation & Child Life Services. "The more space we have, the more advanced equipment we can use, the more varied activities we can do with our patients, all designed to provide individualized interventions to each child's age, size, ability and interests. This new upgrade is allowing our teams to deliver better outcomes to a wider range of patients. We're grateful to Tampa General and the Muma Children's Hospital for this dynamic expansion."

Verticalization on the Scene at Tampa General

Imagine a therapeutic tool that benefits patients in a myriad of ways, including their respiratory system, heart function, gastrointestinal system, joint flexibility, and skin and muscular health. That tool exists and is becoming more prevalent at Tampa General Hospital.

Verticalization, an approach that has long been used in physical therapy, was once thought of primarily as the use of a tilt table to get a surgical patient out of bed. Essentially, the use of a tilt table enabled one team member to do what once took two or more. But with verticalization, the team at Tampa General can do even more.

Tampa General has been using verticalization for a variety of different patients, with excellent results. From a patient with an acquired brain injury to someone recovering from surgery, verticalization can help prevent Intensive Care Unit Acquired Weakness (ICUAW).

The positive impact includes improved breathing, which can minimize hospital-acquired respiratory infections and delirium; improved cardiac function as the patient acclimates gradually to being upright; a functioning gastrointestinal system as upright patients benefit from gravity to keep things moving; and skin, joint and muscular health as this approach makes it possible for patients to be moved more frequently.

In one case, a 64-year-old patient at TGH who had a planned hernia repair experienced complications that resulted in additional surgery. The patient returned to the operating room four times, ultimately leaving with an "open abdomen." The therapy team does not typically see this type of patient. However, the therapy team advocated for consultations and worked with the patient on a breathing tube and ventilator. The patient was engaged in regular verticalization therapy sessions during which time their ability to engage in their environment improved drastically and arm and leg movement began. The patient successfully sat on the edge of the bed, and progressed to standing a few days later. Despite several more surgeries, the use of daily verticalization therapy was a key component of the patient's work toward their goal, ultimately being discharged directly home without additional care in a rehab or skilled nursing facility.

"Our goal is to have a positive impact on our patients, whether we are physically present or

not, and we can do that with verticalization," said Amanda Barry, physical therapist with Tampa General Hospital. "We're using this approach with several different patient populations currently and talking with additional departments about working together to further expose patients to these benefits. We're changing the conversation around why we're using this approach as Tampa General team members see the benefits to patients."



Things Move Fast at FAAST: 30th Anniversary and a New Location to Celebrate

FAAST (the Florida Alliance for Assistive Services and Technology) has a lot to celebrate! In addition to moving to a convenient new location in the TGH Medical Village, the FAAST CRDC (Central Regional Demonstration Center) recently celebrated its 30th anniversary.



As the longest-running FAAST Center in the state, and one of the oldest in the country, FAAST's new space is fresh, bright, and focused on the innovation and technology that helps patients as they navigate daily life. In addition, the easily accessed TGH

Medical Village makes it easy for patients to get to appointments.

FLORIDA ALLIANCE FOR ASSISTIVE SERVICES & TECHNOLOGY FRAST

USF Health

FAAST CENTRAL 30TH ANNIVERSARY

OPEN HOUSE

The 30th anniversary, combined with the new space, felt like a reason to celebrate - so Tampa General did.

In October, the FAAST Center hosted an Open House for more than 50 community members, which included giveaways, an adaptive scavenger hunt, assistive technology demonstrations, multidisciplinary networking and, of course, lots of fun.

"We serve Hillsborough, Pinellas and Manatee counties, and the new location is situated in a wonderful spot for us to serve any person with a disability – as well as their family members and caregivers – in the region," said Assistive

Technology Coordinator Emily Curry. "Our goal is to improve the life of community members with disabilities by increasing their access to assistive technology, so whether it's demonstrations, loans, training, or providing information, we are here to help through empowerment and collaboration."



Animal Instincts: Growing Support for Animal-Assisted Therapy

The Pediatric Rehab Program and Child Life Services teams are at the forefront of an exciting study at the Muma Children's Hospital at TGH investigating the use of Animal-Assisted Therapy (AAT) to influence patient outcomes for inpatient pediatric rehab patients. The study, "Impact of Animal-Assisted Therapy on Pediatric Rehab Patients," is being conducted to determine how Animal Assisted Therapy (AAT) affects patients' active participation in mobilization and therapeutic activities.

Following a year-long protocol development and IRB review and approval, TGH launched the study in November 2023. Researchers are planning to recruit 22 patients. To date, enrollment is halfway complete.

"This is the first time that our programs have been involved in this type of clinical research," said Tim Hill, Manager, Pediatric Rehabilitation & Child Life Services. "We know that some of our patients in pediatric rehab experience anxiety, fear, or some level of pain. We want to know: Can AAT help reduce these stressors, and improve the results of our rehab work? Studying this question thoroughly and systematically is one of the best ways we can provide support for the ideal use of AAT in these patients."

Karen Hussey, Nurse Practitioner for the Rehab Program, added, "It has been both heartwarming and rewarding to watch our rehab patients

light up when Millie and Belle enter the room. Anecdotally, we have observed an instant connection between the dogs and the kids, as well as improved participation and decreased anxiety in our patients. It's really incredible to watch the difference their presence makes, and I'm looking forward to what this study can tell us about improving the lives of our patients."

The study is part of a grant from PetSmart Charities, which provided funds for

the research, a second pediatric facility dog for Child Life Services, position support for a dog handler, and additional dog handler training.

Upon completion of the study, researchers are planning to partner with USF to publish results in a peer-reviewed journal and/or present the data at a medical conference. In addition to publication, researchers plan to use the findings from the study to develop guidance for AAT interventions at Muma Children's Hospital and potentially further plans.



Muma Children's Hospital Supports ZooTampa Kids Fun Run for Pediatric Patients

The Pediatric Rehab team was proud to be a part of the ZooTampa Fun Run, a large pediatric-specific event featuring many teams from across Tampa General Hospital, as well as patients and community members. Conducted in partnership with ZooTampa, this kid-friendly event featured four exciting races throughout the zoo: the 2K ZooRun, the 1K ZooRun, the Toddler Trot, and the Diaper Dash. This unique event encouraged movement and a healthy lifestyle, while showcasing some of the wildlife at ZooTampa.



"We are thrilled to be part of ZooTampa's Fun Run again for many reasons, including the fact that we are both dedicated to providing world-class care to the populations we serve in order to help them live a healthy and happy life," said Melissa Golombek, former vice president of Muma Children's Hospital at TGH and the TGH Women's Institute, now serving as the current TGH chief operating officer. "It was a wonderful day to come together as a community to enjoy nature and promote a healthier community in the Tampa Bay region."

Pediatric Therapists Amy Jones (OT), Lauren Hutcheson (PT), Taylan Wolfe (PT) and Linda Lipman (PT) were present on race day, overseeing a booth and distributing temporary animal tattoos, animal masks and other event swag. In the staging area, therapists led kids in warm-up stretches, featuring animal yoga poses such as "giraffe pose," "flamingo pose," "frog hops," "monkey swings" and "snake slithers."In line with the inclusive nature of pediatrics, the Rehab and Child Life Teams helped with a race simulation featuring an adaptive pre-race for those kids in the hospital who could not participate in the external event. The wheelchair-friendly race wound through the pediatrics floor, with racers cheered on by the ZooTampa mascot, the pediatric facility dog and their medical and therapy teams.



"It's really important to show kids on the pediatric unit that, although they may experience differing abilities due to an injury or health condition, they are still able to participate in community events," said Tim Hill, Manager, Pediatric Rehabilitation & Child Life Services. "This event also reinforces the importance of preventative health and staying active after discharge."



The Zoo Fun Run Simulation Race provided an opportunity for departments across the Muma Children's Hospital to come together and celebrate their patients' journeys, and for pediatric rehab patients to feel connected to their wider community. Due to its success, the pediatric rehab team is hoping in the future to further adapt this event to include a wheelchair-accessible component for the external event.

"As part of an academic health system, we are committed to bringing the highest quality of pediatric services to our region in a child-friendly environment that is family-focused," said Dr. Paul B. Kornberg, TGH medical director of inpatient pediatric rehab services. "That's the clinical side, and the event we held in the hospital for our patients with more complex health issues who couldn't attend ZooTampa's



Fun Run goes beyond that. It exemplifies that every child counts here at Tampa General."

Celebrating Movement as Medicine: National PT Awareness Month

National Physical Therapy month (PT) was celebrated in October providing TGH team members with an opportunity to celebrate the important role that the PT team plays in patients' health care outcomes. During this time, the wider TGH community celebrated the PT Teams with events including sponsored lunches, gift card raffles, and potlucks.

"The PT team is committed to TGH core values, particularly the pillar of excellence, routinely going above and beyond the normal everyday tasks to support our patients," said Danielle Lambrecht, MOT, OTR/L, Occupational Therapist & Educator, Hospital Based Rehab, Tampa General Hospital. "These awareness months give us the opportunity to recommit to this mentality of continually working to better ourselves as clinicians."

The team recognized three areas of PT excellence: Continuing education/ certifications — Many PTs pursue specialty certifications requiring significant effort and time outside of patient hours. The department has board-certified clinical specialists in cardiovascular/pulmonary, geriatric, and neurological areas of PT, as well as specialty certifications for lymphedema and wheelchair evaluations.

Contributing to the education of future physical therapists — TGH physical therapists routinely take students in doctorate programs on

observation rounds to support clinical requirements. TGH also has an acute care residency program, which is now in its third cohort, and a specialized neuro residency program that recently received its five-year accreditation.

Continuous improvement of PT nationally — By participating in and publishing research, TGH therapists are advancing the art and science of the PT discipline. PT team members routinely participate in the annual American Physical Therapy Association Combined Sections Meeting (CSM). Over the last two years, their research has been accepted for five presentations, including:

- Hospital at Home: The Next Frontier for Acute Care Physical Therapy
- Implementation of Adaptive Yoga on Pre-Lung Transplant in Acute Care Setting
- Respiratory Muscle Training for Activity Intolerance and Dyspnea in Acute Exacerbation of Advanced Lung Disease

"PTs specialize in the use of movement as part of medical treatment, working with a multidisciplinary team in collaboration with a broad range of medical disciplines," Danielle said. "And we are glad for the chance to remind our community of the pride, and privilege, we take in improving the lives of TGH patients."

Breath and Balance: Innovative Adaptive Yoga for Lung Transplant Patients

Patients awaiting lung transplant at Tampa General sometimes present with high levels of functional mobility but significant deficits in areas of breath coordination, balance, and flexibility. As a result, TGH's hospital-based rehab team began looking at innovative and effective ways to work with these patients.

Working with pulmonary rehab due to restrictions on heated high-flow nasal cannulas for mobility inspired a new approach to incorporate strengthening, breathing, and mobility in a small space.

Evelyne Orlander, the lead physical therapist on the project, proposed adaptive yoga to her manager and created a team that includes Jackie Johnson and

Katie Kent. The therapists became certified in adaptive yoga to supplement the care that current medical care patients awaiting lung transplants are receiving. The goal is to address mind, body, and spirit, as their prolonged hospitalization often impacts more than just physical health.

The team initiated an IRB study — which included a research protocol, video-led yoga sessions and patient handouts — and began enrolling patients. Currently, they are working with consenting patients during hospitalization pending lung transplant. The yoga practice they do focuses on breathing, posture, stretching, and strengthening — all areas that help improve outcomes for lung transplant patients.

"Yoga is for everyone and is highly adaptable, allowing us to meet our patients where they are," Evelyne said. "whether it's something like modifying the pose of cat-cow to be performed while seated, with an emphasis on breath coordination and thoracic mobility."

Now their goal is to benchmark the impact it has on the patients they are working with, including the unexpected benefits, like the patients who have included yoga principles in their recovery.

"We want to better understand the benefits that yoga provides to our patients," Evelyne said. "We are continually asking ourselves, what is the best care we can provide? Are there other pathways we can use to help patients? We're always seeking effective ways to restore the health of our patients."



The TGH Main Hospital Based Rehabilitation team receives Gumby award from Patient Experience for Excellence

Focusing on Delirium Assessment and Prevention

As part of her Physical Therapy (PT) residency, Karla Jagodinski decided to focus on delirium, a persistent collection of symptoms present in 50% of patients 65 and older.

Working with her mentor, Yvonne Steffens, Karla met with TGH's Patient and Family Advisory Council (PFAC), and with former patients and their loved ones, to discuss the project and get feedback. She also coordinated with the Delirium Committee so that the entire therapy team (occupational therapists, speech therapists, physical therapists) could share their insights. These therapists work closely with patients every day and can see subtle changes in behavior.

The flyer went "wide" at TGH in August when Karla taught a continuing education class to team members on delirium, including how to assess for it. Since then, it has become a resource for all staff in the hospital and can be found on the TGH SharePoint site.

Raising awareness is the purpose of the information, which can be shared with team members as well as family. Long-term, it is part of discharge education if patients are experiencing delirium at home or in a rehab setting.

As TGH continues to focus on providing world-class services to deal with delirium, the flyer is now an effective resource for patients, team members and family.

How to Help a Loved One with Delirium

Delirium is a state of confusion that comes on quickly, and fluctuates, with changes in awareness and attention²

Signs: decreased attention, change in awareness, not knowing where they are, and changes in their thinking.



50% Delirium is present in about half of patients in a hospital that are 65 and older.



Pediatric Rehab Program Receives 'Gold Standard' CARF Accreditation

TGH is proud to report that the Inpatient Pediatric Rehab program achieved CARF Re-Accreditation in October 2023. CARF International (Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities) is an independent, nonprofit accreditor of health and human services. Accreditation indicates that an institution provides high-quality services and meets internationally recognized organizational and rehab program standards.

The CARF seal has long been a hallmark of quality in human services, and bases its accreditation model on a "unique consultative survey model, conformance focus, and evolving field-driven standards."

TGH achieved re-accreditation following a multi-year, consultative peer-review process, which included surveys, on-site visits, and thorough reviews of staff, procedures, policies, and patient outcomes. The certification is up for renewal every three years.

"CARF accreditation demonstrates to our patients, colleagues, and the community that Tampa General provides the highest level of services in our Pediatric Rehab Program," said Tim Hill, Manager, Pediatric Rehabilitation Services & Child Life Services. "For example, CARF standards emphasize the importance of individualizing services for each patient, including patients and caregivers in all aspects of their rehab journey, and decision-making regarding their rehab goals. We take pride in our family-centered approach to meet each patient where they are and help them return to their highest level of function."

CARF also recognizes the multidisciplinary nature of rehab, and the need for collaborating with a range of pediatric services, in addition to rehab nursing and therapies, such as psychology, social work, nutritionists, and respiratory therapists to achieve the best results for patients and families.

Early Mobility in the ICU Gets Moving at TGH

Minimizing length of stay in the ICU is a top priority at TGH, and research has shown that better outcomes are tied to shorter stays. This strategy is drastically different than the thinking decades ago, which was that ICU patients should be undisturbed.

The rehab team at TGH has grown significantly over the past few years, fostering a culture that understands the significant benefits of rehab for ICU patients.

While the definition of early mobility is fluid when it comes to ICU patients, fundamentally it means working with this patient population to provide them with a means to interact with their environment as early and often as possible.

One scenario: A patient who has come out of the operating room is experiencing a strong impact from anesthesia. When the team isn't certain to extubate that patient, rehab therapists guide patients to facilitate their awakening, engage in daily care activities, and promote their strength to ensure a timely transition to extubation.

TGH Physical Therapist Amanda Barry sees success with this plan. Part of the strategy is a closed ICU approach, which makes it possible to work with one team to achieve patient goals. There is more understanding of the goal and therefore more buy-in, which leads to faster, better results.

"Our focus isn't just on saving lives at Tampa General, it's also on giving them a quality of life so they can fully live that life," Amanda said.

The rehab team at Tampa General sees education and advocacy as part of their role for the profession, and they're happy to do it. Amanda's experience at TGH is linked to a multi-disciplinary team that is open and willing to learn in order to improve patient outcomes.

Rehab Matters

Rehab Matters is published by Tampa General Rehabilitation Services for its patients and other stakeholders.

Michael Daniels Director of TGH Rehabilitation Services

ehabMatter

For more information about rehabilitation services, please visit **www.tgh.org**, and search Rehabilitation Services.

For the Tampa General Rehabilitation Hospital, visit tampageneral rehabhospital.com

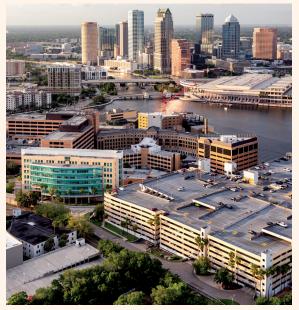
About Tampa General Hospital Rehabilitation Services

Rehabilitation Services at Tampa General Rehabilitation Hospital (TGRH – Kennedy Boulevard) is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) for the following:

- Comprehensive Integrated Inpatient Rehabilitation Program (CIIRP)
- Stroke Specialty Program (SSP)
- Brain Injury Specialty Program (BISP)

The Tampa General Pediatric Rehabilitation Program within the Muma Children's Hospital is accredited by CARF for the Pediatric Specialty Program (PSP).

Rehabilitation Services is also accredited by The Joint Commission, and TGH is proud to be a Magnet Hospital.



In addition to the above services, the continuum of care includes services provided by hospital-based rehabilitation (HBR) therapists and outpatient rehabilitation services.