



# CARES THERAPY CLINIC

*Empowering Health Professions Students  
and Creating Impact in Community*





Property of GTFP,  
Department,  
MUSC,  
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Work Station #17

Dr. [Name]

## Offering Therapy

### TO PATIENTS WHO NEED IT MOST

Since 2008, the Community Aid Relief, Education and Support (CARES) Therapy Clinic has offered occupational (OT), physical (PT), and speech therapy services to the uninsured and underinsured in the Charleston area. Funded by grants, individual and in-kind donations, and supervised by practicing clinicians and MUSC faculty volunteers, CARES Therapy Clinic is recognized as one of the premier student-run free clinics in the nation. In addition to providing over \$375,000 in economic impact to the community annually, it fills a gap for patients who have no insurance or those who have exhausted their benefits.

Two nights a week by appointment, OT and PT students from the MUSC College of Health Professions serve patients recovering from **stroke, spinal cord injury, orthopedic diagnoses, progressive disease processes, and other forms of disability at no cost**. In addition to offsetting over \$230,000 per year in patient costs, the clinic allows students to gain valuable practical experience as early as their first semester in the program.

Located at the MUSC Occupational & Physical Therapy Clinic on Ashley Avenue, CARES Therapy Clinic is managed by a student-run committee comprised of representatives from PT, OT, and Master in Health Administration programs. Volunteer practicing clinicians oversee clinic appointments while MUSC faculty both volunteer in the clinic and serve as committee advisors.



**Kenneth Felder**  
*Doctor of Physical Therapy  
Graduate*

“The CARES Clinic allowed me to put classroom learning into real practice in order to be ready for clinical rotations. I will always cherish helping those most in need achieve personal goals such as helping someone take their first steps after an injury.”

“ Real patient interaction provides students with opportunities to demonstrate empathy and problem solving on the spot in ways that are above and beyond classroom learning activities. ”



**Amanda K. Giles, OTD, OTR/L**  
*Associate Professor,  
Division of Occupational Therapy*

## *Empowering Students* **IN A CLINICAL SETTING**

On average, CARES Therapy Clinic serves about 800 patients a year, providing relief in the form of patient care, clinician costs, and emergency department savings. It also provides a rich environment for students in the physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech-language pathology, and health administration programs to bring their curriculum to practice with hands-on experience.

A typical night at CARES Therapy Clinic involves three to seven student teams of upper and lower classmen, under the supervision of local clinicians, designing and delivering treatment plans for patients from all walks of life as they progress toward specific goals.

All day-to-day operations including scheduling, fundraising and clinic management are run by student-run committees representative of the programs involved.



“ My motivation is seeing our patients get better and seeing the students realize that they were part of that recovery process. ”

**Gretchen A. Seif, PT, DPT**  
*Associate Professor,  
Division of Physical Therapy*



Although some appointments may occasionally take place outside of the clinic's set schedule, most often, it adheres the following:

**Tuesday Evenings:**

Patients with primary orthopedic impairments

**Wednesday Evenings:**

Patients with primary neurological impairments

Telehealth appointments may also be available.

# Unique Benefits

FROM EVERY PERSPECTIVE



STUDENTS

## PUTTING CURRICULUM INTO PRACTICE

In addition to introducing patient interactions as early as the first semester in a program, CARES Therapy Clinic provides students with valuable insight into collaborating with other professionals in the health care landscape. Under faculty supervision, physical therapy, occupational therapy and health administration students govern the clinic through a series of committees, all specializing in different aspects of its operation. From fundraising and strategic planning to budgeting, scheduling, and managing supplies, students are directly responsible for a wide range of issues affecting the clinic's operation. Due to their vast experience, students are often asked to speak or present at annual conferences including the well-known Pro Bono Network Conference. In 2019, CARES Therapy Clinic had over 14 accepted student presentations at the event.

“ The mentorship I got as a student in CARES gave me confidence as I went out on my clinical rotations and inspired me to seek more mentorship through residency after graduation. I will never forget the experiences and connections I made with those patients. ”



**Luke Davidson, PT, DPT, NCS**

“ Participating in the Pro Bono Network Conference gives students a chance to connect with peers and share insights on quality improvement they’ve made through research at the clinic. They also learn how other clinics are run and why MUSC really is the ‘gold standard’ among other university clinics. ”



**Sara Kraft, PT, DPT, NCS, ATP**

*Associate Professor, Division of Physical Therapy*

**CLINICIANS  
& FACULTY**

**GAINING INSIGHT FOR THE CLASSROOM**

Allowing students to interact with patients early on provides faculty advisors and practicing clinicians valuable insight into their classroom curriculum – often revealing issues that merit further explanation or classroom discussion.

“For faculty, there’s a huge gain in being able to watch students in the moment,” said Amanda Giles, associate professor, MUSC Division of Occupational Therapy. “We gain this insight into what they can handle and what areas still need work.” Faculty advisors for CARES Therapy Clinic also present nationally on topics ranging from educational curricular integration, overall process improvement, patient case studies, patient outcomes, and student learning and clinic readiness.





PATIENTS

“It’s great working with the students. They’re enthusiastic, they all work together to try and come up with something that will work with what we’re trying to accomplish.”

*Herb Vogel*  
*Occupational Therapy Patient*

#### RECEIVING CARE + ENRICHING STUDENT EXPERIENCES

Patients at CARES Therapy Clinic receive valuable treatment to improve their quality of life and have the opportunity to be directly involved in the care they receive. Each patient is assigned at least two therapists – most often an upperclassman and a lowerclassman – who collaborate on a treatment plan with the patient based on their specific needs. “My motivation is seeing our patients get better and seeing the students realize that they were a part of that recovery process,” said Gretchen Seif, DPT, associate professor, MUSC Division of Physical Therapy.

“In my experience with students, you see their therapeutic skills and communication improve. They learn to truly listen to clients and not just go off of what they feel they should be doing.”

*Tambra Marik, OTD, OTR/L, CHT*  
*Assistant Professor, Division of Occupational Therapy*





## COMMUNITY IMPACT

### LOWERING PATIENT COSTS • INSPIRING INVOLVEMENT ACROSS SECTORS

Beyond providing education opportunities for students and care to patients in need, CARES Therapy Clinic helps bring the community together for a common cause. Through in-kind donations from local businesses, fundraising events that inspire involvement among leaders in the community, and a shared mission of providing care to patients who would otherwise not receive it, the clinic unites people across sectors. “I think people see the good we’re doing for the community and want to be involved,” said Seif, “we are grateful for the support we receive from donors and volunteer clinicians. We couldn’t succeed without their generosity.”



“CARES has opened my eyes to the amount of people in need just in our community. Having the power to help these people is very rewarding.”

**Alison N. Kuehhas**

*Master in Health Administration Candidate*



## Getting Involved

Governed by a network of committees and supervised by dedicated clinicians and MUSC faculty advisors, CARES Therapy Clinic has maintained a trajectory of growth since its inception in 2008. With plans to integrate the university's new speech-language pathology program in fall 2021 and an ever-present need in the community, the clinic is always searching for volunteers in every capacity.



### PATIENTS

Although CARES Therapy Clinic maintains a waiting list and meets with patients by appointment only, as new clinicians and students become involved, opportunity for care increases. Physical and occupational therapy appointments are scheduled from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Tuesday, for orthopedic rehabilitation, or Wednesday, for neurologic rehabilitation. For patients in need of transportation, grant funding is available for a taxi service within the Charleston area.

All patients are granted 10 therapy visits, during which student teams of two, overseen by a faculty advisor, administer care.

For information about qualifications or to schedule an appointment, **call (843) 792-8019 or email [cares-clinic@musc.edu](mailto:cares-clinic@musc.edu)**

### VOLUNTEER CLINICIANS + STUDENTS

CARES Therapy Clinic is always searching for clinician volunteers and MUSC students from physical therapy, occupational therapy, health administration and speech-language pathology programs. Commitments can be as short- or as long-term as needed to fit with individual schedules and can involve time in the clinic or administratively with committees.

### DONORS

As CARES Therapy Clinic exists solely based on grant funding and generous contributions from the community, partners are always appreciated. To support the clinic, you may make a tax-deductible donation in the form of funds or in-kind donations to the MUSC College of Health Professions. For information on contributing in another way, or for a list of upcoming fundraising events, **visit: [giving.musc.edu/CARESTherapy](https://giving.musc.edu/CARESTherapy)**



“ If it wasn't for CARES I wouldn't be walking. Everyone I've worked with has thoroughly studied my files and that has stood out to me. They pay attention to details and are willing to help and work with me to get better. Everyone here actually CARES. ”

*Rg Kisavi*  
*Physical Therapy Patient*

# CONTACT US

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## ABOUT THE MEDICAL UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA (MUSC)

Founded in 1824 in Charleston, MUSC is the oldest medical school in the South, as well as the state's only integrated, academic health sciences center with a unique charge to serve the state through education, research and patient care. Each year, MUSC educates and trains more than 3,000 students and nearly 800 residents in six colleges: Dental Medicine, Graduate Studies, Health Professions, Medicine, Nursing and Pharmacy. For information on academic programs, visit [muscd.edu](https://muscd.edu).

As the clinical health system of the Medical University of South Carolina, MUSC Health is dedicated to delivering the highest quality patient care available, while training generations of competent, compassionate health care providers to serve the people of South Carolina and beyond. Comprising some 1,600 beds, more than 100 outreach sites, the MUSC College of Medicine, the physicians' practice plan, and nearly 275 telehealth locations, MUSC Health owns and operates eight hospitals situated in Charleston, Chester, Florence, Lancaster and Marion counties. To learn more about clinical patient services, visit [muschealth.org](https://muschealth.org).

MUSC and its affiliates have collective annual budgets of \$3.2 billion. The more than 17,000 MUSC team members include world-class faculty, physicians, specialty providers and scientists who deliver groundbreaking education, research, technology and patient care.

## ABOUT THE COLLEGE OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS

Established in 1966, the College of Health Professions is one of six colleges in the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC). The college is home to 11 different academic degree programs, several of which are ranked in the top 30 nationally by U.S. News & World Report. It is the vision of the college to improve the health of populations by developing and inspiring health scientists and leaders through our diverse program offerings.

We are changing what's possible through collaboration, dedication, commitment to excellence, and service to others.



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