

## **“Why I Chose the OSUWMC Neurologic Physical Therapy Residency Program”**

Clinical and didactic experiences in PT school led me to pursue advanced training in neurologic practice upon graduation. The neurologic residency program at OSUMC was the perfect option, offering clinical mentoring in a variety of settings across the rehabilitation spectrum, as well as educational and research opportunities with clinical and academic faculty. Now, as a full-time clinician, I am able to better serve my patients with advanced knowledge of evidence-based practice and an awareness of relevant clinical research. I highly recommend this program as an avenue to both enhance clinical skills and foster an attitude of life-long learning in the field of neurologic physical therapy.

Brooke Vaughan, PT, DPT, NCS  
Neurologic Resident, 2008-2009

Choosing to do a Neurologic PT Residency was not an obvious choice for me. I was unsure when I graduated what my exact interests were and how I wanted to go forth with my physical therapy career. After working for one year I felt that I was missing something in my practice. I realized that what I wanted to do was to specialize in Neurologic Physical Therapy but I was unsure how to go about it. I was familiar with residencies so I began doing research to assist me in my decision making. I wanted something diverse that exposed me to teaching as well as learning opportunities. I made the decision that a residency was the best path for me.

OSUMC offers an extensive medical campus. They allowed me to explore all areas of neurologic impairment and how they correlated to physical therapy. At OSUMC I was surrounded by motivated therapists that were not only dedicated to their patients and developing as individuals, they were also dedicated to me and my learning. I feel that OSU assisted me in my preparation to becoming not only a specialized therapist but, they aided me in the development of my teaching and leadership skills. I am more confident in not only my abilities to better serve my patients but also to be a superior team member. I am very fortunate to have had this opportunity at OSUMC.

Liz Ulanowski, PT, DPT, NCS  
Neurologic Resident, 2009-2010

After practicing for 3 years, I found myself drawn to treating a neurologic population. I was practicing in an outpatient setting and found myself getting a lot of referrals for different neurologic diagnoses and being recommended as an “expert”. I certainly did not feel that way, and I had no neurologic specialists to mentor me and found myself trying to learn using evidence-based medicine. This is what led me to pursue a neurologic residency; I wanted to have mentorship and “hands-on” experience in specialized areas of neurologic practice such as movement disorders and muscular dystrophies.

I did research through the American Physical Therapy Association on which residency program I thought would fit what I needed, and the Ohio State University stood alone. They were unique in offering an opportunity to treat patients across the continuum of care. I had the incredible experience of being able to treat 3 patients from my caseload in acute care, inpatient rehab and even followed them to outpatient rehab. The chance to follow this progress and develop prognostic skills is invaluable. Ohio State had a great structure for assisting the resident in learning how to teach and I was given opportunities to teach independently in labs and even do a lecture to the 2<sup>nd</sup> year students.

Ohio State also offers an incredible number of opportunities to work in Centers of Excellence for Huntington’s disease and Parkinson Disease, is one of the few sites in the U.S. for the Neurologic Recovery Network and so many more unique and exceptional programs I would not have the time to explain. Essentially, if you have an interest in a specialized practice area, it’s likely Ohio State sees those patients. There are so many research opportunities; it’s actually difficult to decide which path you want to go down. I would not trade my experience for anything. I not only gained a tremendous amount of knowledge and prepared to take my neurologic specialist exam, but gained leadership skills and confidence. I would without hesitation recommend this program to anyone that is seriously considering a residency; it is exceptional.

Hannah Zajac PT, DPT, NCS  
Neurologic Resident 2010-2011

As most of us PT-minds are inclined to do, if I'm presented a challenge I want to take it. If there's one thing my PT professors instilled in me, it's that middle of the road, mundane practice is not for this gal.

So I've always known I'd be interested in pursuing a residency upon my graduation. The reason I chose to apply to Ohio State after comparing all the credentialed residency programs is because it seemed to have the winning combo: distinct experience working in three different settings (acute, inpatient rehabilitation, and outpatient), organized weekly one-on-one mentoring with expert physical therapists, teaching assistantships in the DPT students' neurologic labs, exposure to handfults of specialty clinics often literally in your clinic's backyard, a funded opportunity to participate in the APTA's Combined Section Meeting, and availability to participate in advance neurologic PT courses for University credit.

Having just completed the residency I can definitively say it was an invaluable experience, and I'd do it again if given the opportunity! I've come out with a confidence I'll boldly speculate most of my peers have yet to achieve, and I've had experiences unique to even my most veteran colleagues. I am a proud graduate, and I fully endorse Ohio State University at Wexner Medical Center's Neurologic Physical Therapy Residency.

Meredith Banhos PT, DPT, NCS  
Neurologic Resident 2011-2012

I knew early in my education as a physical therapy student that I was interested in pursuing neurologic physical therapy. As graduation was approaching, I began thinking about my future patients. I decided that it would be a disservice to them if I did not specialize my practice through a neurologic residency program. That is what led me to Ohio State.

When describing Ohio State's residency program to my friends and family, I often sum it up by stating that it offers a therapist more education and focused professional experiences in one year than some PT's obtain in their entire careers. Advanced didactic courses, opportunities to teach in the DPT neurologic labs, time spent with renowned physicians in specialized clinics, and mentoring with expert neurologic physical therapists are just a few examples of these unique experiences that the Ohio State's program offers. The teaching opportunity is one that is not found in all residency programs but that I felt was crucial to my becoming an expert neurologic therapist. In educating my future colleagues, I felt an even stronger desire to maintain my knowledge and skills as current and evidenced-based as possible. The ability to practice in each of the acute care, inpatient rehabilitation, and outpatient settings was also an invaluable experience. A thorough understanding of the entire continuum allows for consideration of patients' past experiences, future needs, and more comprehensive patient care.

Having recently completed the residency program, I am astonished by the amount of professional growth I have experienced in just one, short year. I feel more than

confident that I have the tools to prepare myself for the Neurologic Physical Therapy Specialist Certification Exam. Furthermore, I am surprised by the amount I felt able to “give back” during my time as a resident. I was not simply a “student”, “learner”, and “mentee” during the residency. Through teaching opportunities and interactions with colleagues in the clinic, I also feel I gained the titles of “teacher,” “mentor,” and “expert.” This, in addition to the outcomes achieved with my patients, is one of the most rewarding products of my time spent as a resident. Therefore, I would without hesitation recommend The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center’s Neurologic Physical Therapy Residency to any that desires to become an expert neurologic physical therapist.

Meghan McCausland PT, DPT, NCS  
Neurologic Resident 2012-2013

As a new physical therapy graduate seeking additional learning and experience via a neurologic residency program, I looked at a number of residencies prior to applying to the Ohio State University. Of all the programs I researched, OSU’s emphasis on teaching, mentoring, and utilization of evidence-based practice was unmatched. Without a doubt, OSU’s residency program was the best designed to help me reach my personal career goals - attaining my clinical specialty in neurology, becoming a clinical instructor, and contributing to the physical therapy profession through research.

OSU’s residency program is uniquely structured to provide a variety of experiences including regular one-on-one mentoring, observation and participation in specialty clinics, teaching in physical therapy labs and lectures, and treatment in three different settings - acute care, inpatient rehabilitation, and outpatient rehabilitation. OSU also encourages residents to personalize their residency experience through the completion of an independent case study project, optional academic coursework, and continuing education – something I highly valued during my search for a residency program.

In addition to OSU’s residency curriculum, the program boasts an unparalleled network of highly experienced and passionate professors, researchers, and clinicians. Every last person involved in OSU’s program demonstrated a deep interest in my learning and growth throughout my residency. My mentors pushed me to stretch my boundaries and to continually think outside of the box in relation to my patient care, teaching, and research. The never-ending support and encouragement of this fantastic group helped me to grow tremendously as both a person and as a clinician.

If you’re searching for an incredible neurology residency experience, I unreservedly recommend OSU’s program.

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Neurologic Resident 2012-201