

New Collaboration Agreement Northwestern Medicine and Physical Therapy & Human Movement Sciences

Northwestern Medicine is the shared strategic vision of Northwestern Memorial HealthCare and Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine to transform the future of health care.

We are proud to announce that the Feinberg School of Medicine Department of Physical Therapy & Human Movement Sciences (PTHMS) and Northwestern Memorial HealthCare (NMHC) have signed a historic agreement establishing comprehensive collaboration to integrate physical therapy Education, Research, and Clinical Practice for the benefit of patients, rehabilitation clinicians, researchers, DPT students, and physical therapists in residencies and fellowships.

This agreement brings together the oldest physical therapy school in the U.S., currently ranked 4th by U.S. News & World Report among over 260 physical therapy schools, with NMHC's preeminent hospital system. The tripartite "three-legged stool" model of medical education, integrating education with research and clinical care, has dominated medical education for a century and is the foundation upon which U.S. medicine became a world leader. Our new collaboration for rehabilitation services will integrate academic physical therapy as a full participant in Northwestern Medicine.

The agreement completes a process that PTHMS initiated with its 2007 strategic plan calling for full integration with the academic medical center on the historically successful tripartite foundation. The 2013 PTHMS collaboration agreement with Shirley Ryan AbilityLab (SRALab) was the first major step in realizing the vision. PTHMS's integration with NMHC under this 2023 agreement thus represents the culmination of a 16-year effort.

With this agreement, all PTHMS DPT students will experience at least one rotation through an NMHC facility (vs. less than half now). The collaboration will:

- Allow PTHMS to function as the academic hub for physical therapy throughout NMHC.
- Open doors for research and data collection across the system.
- Bring opportunities for NMHC therapists to provide clinical and didactic education in the DPT program.
- Open the door to PTHMS faculty to practice in NMHC facilities.

A new jointly funded Director of Translational Rehabilitation Research will ensure robust and ongoing commitment to the tripartite model.

We hope this Northwestern Medicine rehabilitation partnership will inculcate a "teaching hospital culture" for rehabilitation throughout the health system. In the coming weeks and months, we will be reaching out to clinicians and stakeholders with conversation, implementation steps, and requests for feedback.

We believe PTHMS's academic-clinical partnerships with SRALab and NMHC provide PTHMS with the means to continue to excel as one of the top physical therapy schools in the U.S., and that this academic-medical center model of physical therapy education, research, and practice will allow us all to play a major role in creating and leading science-underpinned rehabilitation practice into the future.

Physical Therapy & Human Movement Sciences

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