Course Title: Physical Therapy Management of Parkinson’s Disease: U.S. Delivery Models that Adhere to International Best Practice Standards

Course Speaker: Miriam Rafferty, PT, DPT, PhD, Board Certified Neurologic Physical Therapist

Course Description: Parkinson’s disease is a complex condition with motor and non-motor symptoms that impact the delivery of physical therapy. The delivery of physical therapy is further complicated by health systems concerns. This presentation will present evidence-based physical therapy interventions in the context of international best practice standards, and will discuss how these standards can be met within the US health systems. Particular attention will address complex problems in Parkinson’s disease, such as maintenance of home exercise participation, apathy, freezing of gait, and cognitive changes. Delivery models that focus on restoration, compensation, or skilled maintenance of function will be compared. The results of a recent national study of the barriers to, and facilitators of, physical therapy best practices will be presented. Attendees will participate in case discussions to develop plans of care for people with PD at various stages of the disease using knowledge of both best practices and healthcare delivery models.

Course Objectives:
1. To describe international best practice standards for physical therapy evaluation and treatment of people with Parkinson’s disease across the stages of the disease.
2. To discuss barriers and facilitators of physical therapy and exercise maintenance for people with Parkinson’s disease from perspectives of the patient, physical therapist, and physician.
3. To compare restorative, compensatory, and skilled maintenance practices for complex Parkinson’s-related problems such as maintenance of home exercise participation, apathy, freezing of gait, and cognitive changes.
4. To design physical therapy delivery plans for case examples of people with early, middle, and advanced stage Parkinson’s disease.

Course Level: Intermediate to Advanced