

# Associate TESTIMONIAL

## **What is your role in your community?**

I am the Speech-Language Pathologist and Therapy Coordinator at Wesley Woods.

## **What services does your team provide to your clients?**

We offer dysphagia therapy for swallowing issues, urinary incontinence therapy for the pelvic floor muscle, fall prevention, fine motor therapy to improve hand coordination abilities, such as writing and playing cards, therapy for both before and after joint surgery, cognitive therapy, and maintenance therapy for people with progressive disorders such as Parkinson's and multiple sclerosis.

## **What kinds of goals do your clients have, and how do you help them to achieve those?**

We have a variety of equipment, including diathermy, e-stim devices, and weights to increase strength and motor movements and decrease pain. Additionally, we enjoy working with patients in the resident gym to establish home exercise programs. When working on activities of daily living, we often visit the patient's home to assess any home adaptations to support their abilities. It might be that the washing machine is too tall or the patient has difficulty getting items out of the microwave, and we want to improve that experience.

## **What benefits do seniors gain from our therapy services?**

Seniors experience increased independence, maintain an active lifestyle, and enjoy improved quality of life.

## **What is rewarding about your work with older adults?**

We learn as much from our patients as they learn from us. Their life experiences and history are important influences on our treatment, including past injuries, the type of work they did, and details about their family history.

## **What do you wish more individuals knew about therapy services?**

Therapy is often a way to maintain independence or work on staying at your current level of care instead of needing more support or assistance from family or caregivers. It is better to be proactive in having therapy than waiting for an issue and being reactive. A small pain or balance issue is much worse if you wait until you have a fall. Additionally, the biggest goal for our therapy team is how to keep someone at their current level of living through adaptation and strengthening instead of moving people to other care.

## **Are there any successes you are particularly proud of and would like to share?**

I had a patient go from mild-moderate cognitive deficits to within normal limits and remaining in Independent Living with decreased daily need for caregivers since starting with speech therapy. Another Independent Living resident needed moderate to maximum care and speech therapy for cognition, and their progress has returned them to living with their spouse in Independent Living and driving and writing a book.

## **What are your tips for slip and fall prevention?**

Never "park" your assistive device, such as a walker, out of the way and walk the rest of the way to a chair without it because "it's just a short walk."

~ Jackie G. ...