This past spring the CARES Therapy Clinic began a new endeavor, The CARES Biggest Loser program in the form a pro-bono weight management program in an effort to provide the local community with another way to improve health behaviors. The program's blue print dates back to 2014, when the MUSC Physical Therapy Class of 2016 began on working on funding for the program. In conjunction with PT faculty members Dr. Gretchen Seif, Dr. David Sword, Dr. Chris Gregory and Dr. Sara Kraft, the program successfully received the Department of Health Professions Intercollegiate Seed Grant! Since then current third year PT students Meghan Johnson and Madison Shulte, with faculty help, have been running the program and currently oversee it. With the funding from the Seed Grant and the drive of the current physical and occupational therapy students and faculty, the weight management program has taken off with great success and is currently in its second cycle with 12 enrollees.

The program takes place over the course of 10 weeks, each session building on the previous one, and meets Tuesday night at 6pm in the CARES Therapy Clinic. So far our participants have been current and past CARES patients or those who have received a referral for weight management and are unable to attend the MUSC weight management program. Each session consists of 30 minutes of education, covering everything from nutrition to the benefits of exercise, and 30 minutes of actual exercise. These sessions are run by PT/OT students at MUSC who are equipped with the skills to help participants get on the right path to a healthier way of life. Each participant receives tools at enrollment that are meant to aid them in taking the necessary steps to reach their goals. Tools like a nutrition tracker, pedometer...
and educational handouts from each session make it much easier for our participants when it comes to sticking to the plan set out at the onset of the program. As far as requirements to join the program, participants must have a serious interest in improving their health in the long term. Participants should enroll at the start of each session to make sure they get the most out of the program.

Participants who have completed the program have had great success, especially those who start the program from the beginning and consistently come to each of the sessions. In the spring we had participants who lost up to 10lbs just by making the simplest of dietary changes! Some of these participants were so thrilled with their results that they have come back for more by taking part in our summer session which is currently in its fourth week. After asking some of the participants what they felt what made the biggest difference to them in terms of helping them succeed, they said that tracking what they did (activity?) and food eaten at home made a huge difference. These strategies combined with the knowledge of nutrition and exercise are what makes the program so effective. If you have been thinking about making a change in your health for the better or if you think this program sounds like something you would like to check out come on down to the CARES clinic Tuesday nights at 6pm or send us an email at the address in the yellow box below for more information!

Ways to help!
Check out our website for ways to donate and volunteer at http://academicdepartments.musc.edu/cares/ptot or use our contact info below to find our more ways to help!

For any comments, questions or concerns about this news letter or the CARES Clinic, contact the email address or phone number below:
E-mail: cares_public_relations@musc.edu
Phone: (843) 876-7097

For any questions about the Weight Management Program, contact either of the email addresses below:
karlesky@musc.edu
or
hunkler@musc.edu
Patient Spotlight
Shirley Dais

1. How do you like CARES?

I love coming here, I wish I could keep coming!! My favorite thing about coming is the student therapists that work with me.

2. What is Ms. Dais goal at CARES?

My goal when I came into CARES was to get my back feeling better so I could get back to work as a Nurse Assistant and get back to walking.

3. How is Ms. Dais progressing?

My back has gotten much better and bothers me less at work, and I can even take longer walks since coming to CARES.
Clinician Spotlight
Jill Hubbuch

1. Where did you get your undergraduate/graduate degree?
   
   I'm a Gamecock (University of South Carolina)

2. Did you always plan on being a physical therapist? If not, which career path were you initially headed?
   
   Not really, I was interested in everything. I narrowed it down and ended up with a job I love. I am really lucky that I like what I do everyday.

3. What made you want to become a physical therapist?
   
   These are the same to me, I want to help people have a better quality of life. I am fascinated by the science and physiology behind what we do and always want to learn something new. I think it does a dis-service to my patients unless I continue to grow.

4. What drives you to be a better PT?
   
   The smiles of the faces of clients who have improved with PT and the fact that anything worth doing is worth doing well.

5. Why is CARES so important to you?
   
   It was the best learning experience I had as a student at MUSC and I wanted to continue to give back. It gave me the opportunity to apply clinically what we were learning in the classroom, to be a leader, be part of a team, do research and give back to the community all at once. I am proud of what it has become and that I was a little tiny part of that. I also think it helps the students as much as the community we service. As a clinician it keeps me up to date and on my toes.
6. **Do you work with other medical professions at your practice? How much do you value inter professional experience?**

   I work very closely with my referral sources and I have learned as much from the physicians next door as I have from practicing. Their input and working closely together always produces better outcomes for the patients.

7. **What area of your chosen profession particularly interests you?**

   I focus on orthopedics but also love manual therapy and believe it helps me get my patients better faster.

8. **What does a perfect day look like for you?**

   We opt for outdoor activities but hanging with my family is always fun. They are a riot.
Student PT Spotlight
Dana Richards

1. Where did you get your undergraduate/Master's degree?

I went to the University of Virginia. Go Hoos!!

2. Do you see yourself staying in Charleston after you graduate? If not, where are you headed?

Yes, I would very much like to stay in Charleston after I graduate. I'm a Charleston native and my parents live here as well.

3. What made you want to become a PT?

I did not consider physical therapy as a career until a year after I graduated from college. I was teaching English in Spain at the time and one of my students was a physical therapist. One day we talked about careers and she clearly loved her job! She was such a positive person too, so this made me begin to consider physical therapy. I returned home for the summer and shadowed some physical therapists in Charleston. I wanted an active and rewarding job in health care and decided this was the job for me!

4. What drives you to be a better PT?

The knowledge that my performance as a PT can have a huge effect on someone's life. I want to be a positive influence!

5. Why is CARES so important to you?

My involvement in the CARES Clinic has been an extremely important part of my experience at MUSC so far. I love coming into the clinic every chance I get, whether to interpret for a Spanish-speaking patient or volunteer as a student PT. I also enjoy serving on the CARES
Board and participating in the new Weight Management Program. I have learned so much from these experiences and I love giving back to the local community through CARES!

6. **What area of your chosen profession particularly interests you?**

I have a lot of interests in PT at the moment: psychologically informed physical therapy, mindfulness, pain science and vestibular rehab.

7. **Did you always plan on being an PT? If not, which career path were you initially headed?**

When I started college I thought I wanted to go to medical school. My Dad and one of my brothers are physicians. Later on I decided to major in Environmental Sciences and thought that I would pursue research in this field or work for an environmental non-profit.

8. **What does a perfect day look like for Dana Richards?**

Time with family and friends, tennis, yoga, and delicious home-cooked meals.
Student OT Spotlight
Katie Faerber

1. Where did you get your undergraduate/Master's degree?
   I received my degree in Psychology from the University of South Carolina.

2. Do you see yourself staying in Charleston after you graduate? If not, where are you headed?
   I would love to stay nearby but hopefully somewhere a bit more rural.

3. What made you want to become an OT?
   I chose OT because I am a people pleaser and that makes me want to help others become the happiest versions of themselves so they can enjoy their lives to the fullest.

4. What drives you to be a better OT?
   I think knowing that occupational therapists have the opportunity to make significant impacts on the lives of others is absolutely inspiring and it makes me want to do my best in everything I can for them.

5. Why is CARES so important to you?
   I believe that being a part of CARES through clinical experience as well as being on the CARES Outcomes Committee has made a huge impact on my confidence in my clinical skills as well as my understanding of the various assessments we use to evaluate our clients. I know that both of these opportunities in CARES will aid me in my experiences as a clinician one day.

6. What area of your chosen profession particularly interests you?
   I am really interested in working in the pediatric population as well as in hand therapy down the road.

7. Did you always plan on being an OT? If not, which career path were you initially headed?
From as early as the fourth grade, I wanted to be an elementary school teacher. However, about three-quarters of the way to earning my undergraduate degree in Education, I realized that it was not as fulfilling as I had hoped so I decided to expand my horizons by changing my degree to Psychology. From there I was involved in various research projects which led me to occupational therapy!

**8. What does a perfect day look like for Katie Faerber?**

I love the feeling I get from being out on the water. So my perfect day would probably include taking the boat out with my boyfriend and our sweet dog, Pearl!