

THE Importance of Caring

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my journey into patient care



Jose M. Velasco, PTA
 INPATIENT PHYSICAL THERAPY ASSISTANT

Jose M. Velasco, physical therapy assistant (PTA), has been serving patients at Columbus Community Hospital (CCH) for more than ten years.

Though Velasco is now part of CCH's physical therapy team, he started at CCH in another capacity – as a medical interpreter.

In this position, Velasco worked with CCH patients whose first language was not English. He helped them explain their symptoms to health care providers and helped health care providers better communicate their treatment plans.

Velasco's work as an interpreter ensured CCH patients who did not speak English received high quality care.

The work also gave Velasco his next career goal.

During his time as a CCH interpreter, Velasco frequently worked with the staff of CCH's Rehabilitative Services. That's when he became interested in the PTA medical field.

Inspired by his work with Rehabilitative Services, Velasco went on to get an Associate of Applied Science Degree in Physical Therapy Assistant from Colby Community College in Colby, Kansas. As Velasco pursued this goal, he said he was fully supported by CCH staff.

“CCH has supported me every step of the way,” he said. **“When Theresa Hilton was my supervisor during my interpreter services period, she provided me with her full support and encouragement to pursue my physical therapy assistant degree.”**

Velasco has been a PTA at CCH for the past six years.

In his role as a PTA, Velasco provides physical therapy services under the supervision of a physical therapist.

The goal of physical therapy is to allow patients to reach their full potential and return to the activities they enjoy most. With this in mind, physical therapy staff work one-on-one with patients to create a plan of care that works best for them.

At CCH, physical therapists use a multi-disciplinary approach to treat patients of a variety of ages with a variety of diagnoses. They also work closely with occupational therapists to ensure they meet all of their patients' therapy needs.

For example, each morning, CCH physical therapy staff, including Velasco, meet with occupational therapists to discuss their caseloads. Together, they discuss plans of care for their patients and divide up their work to best serve their patients' needs. From there,

therapy staff keep in contact the rest of the day to better coordinate their care.

“We split our caseload again later in the morning for the afternoon sessions and discuss any updates or changes in the plan of care,” Velasco said.

As directed by his supervising therapist, Velasco treats CCH inpatients using physical therapy techniques that help them reduce their pain and improve their mobility.

Velasco was drawn to his career as a PTA, partly because he was interested in how the human body works to **“create movement and maintain stability,”** he said.

He was also drawn to a medical profession, because he saw it as a chance to be part of a **“very rewarding field”** that would allow him to help people.

“It's great when you begin working with a patient and help them accomplish their goals,” he said.

To learn more about Velasco, or the services offered through CCH's Rehabilitative Services, visit www.columbushosp.org.