

# THE Importance of Caring

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my journey into health care



## Doug Janssen, PT, DPT DIRECTOR OF REHABILITATIVE SERVICES

Some people find themselves in the health care field almost by accident. They end up in health care because life's twists and turns lead them to a career they'd never expected.

Doug Janssen PT, DPT, director of Rehabilitative Services at Columbus Community Hospital (CCH), is not one of those people.

He knew health care was the career field for him from an early age.

**"Before I graduated high school, I knew that I wanted to be a physical therapist. It seemed like a match,"** he said. **"I was very intrigued by what the human body does in response to exercise – how it adapts and improves and gets stronger. And I knew I wanted to be a physical therapist early on for that reason."**

Janssen was also interested in a career in health care because it would allow him to care for people, just as he had seen his parents care for others. While he was growing up, Janssen's family had neighbors who had Parkinson's disease and multiple sclerosis and Janssen's parents often helped them.

**"I watched my parents provide help and take care of some of the needs of those neighbors, so I learned there is a great value in helping others,"** he said. **"That's another reason I wanted to be a physical therapist."**

Janssen went on to receive a Bachelor's of Science degree in exercise science from Doane College, before earning his Doctorate of Physical Therapy (DPT) from Creighton University.

From there, he would go on to practice physical therapy in a variety of settings

before coming to CCH. Janssen worked at a large hospital during outpatient physical therapy and aquatic therapy, as well as wound care. He also worked with a couple private practices in Texas and Nebraska, and served as physical therapy director at a hospital in Atkinson, Nebraska.

Through these experiences, Janssen was able to work in outpatient care, inpatient care and home health, as well as provide physical therapy at skilled nursing facilities.

Janssen started working at CCH in 2006 as an inpatient physical therapist, but he quickly started doing outpatient therapy, home health and leading a couple of special group projects for the department.

When the director of Rehabilitative Services position opened up in 2009, Janssen decided to apply.

**"It was just the right time in my career, after about 10 years of practice in all the different settings, so I felt like I could contribute from all my experience,"** he said.

As director of Rehabilitative Services, Janssen oversees CCH's inpatient and outpatient physical, occupational and speech therapy, the therapy part of home health, the Columbus Wellness Center, Wiggles and Giggles Therapy for Kids, Premier Physical Therapy, as well as CCH's athletic training services and sports medicine programs.

This is a big task, but Janssen said his work is made easier thanks to his incredible staff.

**"I feel really fortunate for the team we have in Rehab Services. All the team members we have on staff, no matter what sort of therapy they do, and our office staff and technicians, they are all great to work alongside,"** he said. **"All my managers, Jill**

**Zaruba, Randy Perault, Rob Marshall and my assistant director, Michell Ruskamp, are an excellent group. I'm able to do the things I do because they do their jobs so well. This team is great to lead."**

Janssen appreciates the support he gets from his Rehab Services staff and the support he gets from hospital administration too.

**"Of all the employers I've been with in my profession, the hospital here has been by far the best in supporting its employees,"** he said.

Janssen said CCH administration supports employees by allowing them to get specialized education and certifications and by purchasing equipment to keep the hospital up-to-date with the latest technology and techniques.

**"Everyone is constantly pursuing excellence in patient care,"** he said. **"Working here, I've just been exposed to so many people in every department who just really want to do the best job and take care of the patient in the best way – at a high level – that I don't think is found everywhere."**

This willingness to adapt to better care for patients is important in a health care field that Janssen said is always changing. He said people who want to pursue a career in health care have to be willing to adapt to this change, which can be challenging.

**"Health care is very dynamic. That's a constant in health care – there's always change, so be ready to be adaptable in the midst of all that change,"** he said. **"That change can be challenging, but if you always focus back on why you are there – which is to help people and to do your best – that's where the reward is found."**

For more information on Janssen or CCH's Rehabilitative Services, visit [www.columbushosp.org](http://www.columbushosp.org).