

THE Importance of Caring

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my journey into health care



Randy Perault, MSPT Cert, MDT, ATC

DIRECTOR OF PREMIER PHYSICAL THERAPY

It took Randy Perault a few tries to find the right place he could call home.

After having jobs in three states in three years, he looked for a community that would be the best fit for his family. It also would have to be somewhere he could practice physical therapy and work with high school athletic teams.

He found that in Columbus.

For the past 27 years, Perault has provided physical therapy for people of all ages in Columbus and the surrounding area. Whether that has been helping a student-athlete recover from a knee injury or assisting an adult with musculoskeletal pain, Perault has restored the health of many people as the director of physical therapy at Columbus Community Hospital's Premier Physical Therapy.

Therapists see an average of 225 patients at the clinic each week, providing them with a variety of therapies and treatments for their diagnoses.

Perault couldn't picture himself working any other place now, but physical therapy wasn't his first career choice. After earning an associate's degree from a community college, he worked in a lab at a sewage treatment plant for a few years. But he realized he wanted to

pursue a job that was more athletically inclined.

Perault hoped to find an occupation that would combine two of his passions: sports and health care.

"I talked to coaches, athletic trainers and doctors to figure what would be my best plan in the future," he said. **"Physical therapy seemed like the best way to combine both. I could work with athletic teams and sports injuries."**

Perault received a bachelor's degree in athletic training from Minnesota State University in Mankato, Minnesota, then earned a master's degree in physical therapy from Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri.

After working at physical therapy practices in Arizona, Minnesota and Iowa, Perault moved to Columbus. He worked at a clinic here for a few years before deciding to open his own clinic in 1994 with his wife, Pam, a physical therapist and athletic trainer.

Going into private practice was a venture he never envisioned for himself. For 10 years, he and his wife ran the clinic, treated patients and were athletic trainers at schools. It was a busy schedule that included all the roles that come with owning a business.

When the opportunity came to merge his clinic with CCH in 2004, Perault didn't hesitate. Doing so allowed the hospital to take care of the business side while he focused on providing patient care.

Interacting with patients and seeing the progress they make are his favorite parts of the job. "That is the neat thing about physical therapy," Perault said. **"We spend 45-60 minutes with these folks during treatment. We get to know them — they are not just a patient. We like to give them a hard time, and they give it right back. It makes therapy fun and their whole experience more enjoyable. That is one of our strengths here."**

Perault said health care is an excellent career because it is always needed and constantly evolving. He is happy with his choice to pursue physical therapy because he knows he is providing a needed service to others.

"I always said that if we got paid just in thank-you's, that this would be the best job," he said. **"People are truly grateful that you were able to help them, and that is the most rewarding part."**

For more information about Premier Physical Therapy, visit columbushosp.org.