



Worcester Physical Therapy management and staff stands ready to help patients get moving again. Seated front (left to right): Tamisha Daniels, Lisa Almstrom, and Debbie Bonin. Standing (left to right): Tom Willette, owner; Kim Vescera, Debbie Page, Patty Delage, Paul Lee, Edwidge Beauzile; Sarai Nichols, Andrew Vazquez, and Laura Trudell.

A personalized approach to physical therapy, fitness and wellness

Thirty years ago at the University of Buffalo (now SUNY at Buffalo), Tom Willett took a class in gross anatomy. He liked the class so much that he transferred into the physical therapy program. Upon receiving his master's degree from Boston University, Willett chose an entrepreneurial approach — he opened a private practice in Worcester.

Willett introduced the first nautilus equipment in the city. "People thought it was a fad," he says. Today, clients at Worcester Physical Therapy have access to a variety of state-of-the-art fitness equipment and treatment modalities.

In addition to sports injuries, work-related injuries and accidents, Worcester Physical Therapy Services, Inc. (WPTS) treats people with acute and chronic pain in its programs for joints, lower back, myofascial pain and headaches. The trained and experienced staff of physical and massage therapists treat balance problems, sports performance, orthopedic and neurological conditions in children and elders.

The practice specializes in a range of other conditions including: herniated discs, plantar fasciitis, knee and ankle injuries, tennis elbow and rotator cuff injuries. WPTS also treats people disabled by Parkinson's Disease, MS and cerebral palsy.

"I look at physical therapy techniques and equipment as our toolbox," Willett says. "We provide our employees with the best tools possible." Continuing education is a constant for the practice, that has recently expanded to offer services beyond the traditional approach to physical therapy, for instance, the Graston Technique.

Another constant in the practice for staff and clients is the goal of improvement. "People come in want-

ing to be fixed," Willett explains. A big change in recent years is the clients' level of knowledge and sense of ownership. "People come in knowing more about their injury and condition and are much more responsible for their own care. They also ask more questions," he adds. "We welcome that."

The ongoing challenge for physical therapists is motivating their clients throughout several weeks of treatment. "We develop an individualized plan for each client, but we're constantly monitoring and tinkering with it as we go along. People want to see progress, they need to feel results," Willett says, emphasizing that his practice stresses this personalized approach.

To further help patients complete their journey on the road to wellness, Worcester Physical Therapy will soon offer a full range of fitness and wellness programs including exercise, weight reduction, nutrition counseling, personal trainers, yoga and Pilates.

"We guarantee that our clients will be seen within 48 hours of a referral and they are generally able to complete the program in 13 visits," he adds. The results of Worcester Physical Therapy's programs — functional outcomes — are excellent, according to Willett. Clients are asked to complete an exit survey, which allows them to rate the practice in a range of areas, from ease in making appointments to satisfaction with the therapist's care. "Not only have we never received a negative comment," Willett says, "we have never received a poor or even average rating from our clients."

At WPTS, patients work closely with their physical therapist and in most instances, a client's case is managed by the same physical therapist from the beginning to the end of the treatment program. As a private

practice physical therapy center, WPTS is committed to providing the highest quality of care, in a cost-effective manner.

Client testimonials cite WPTS' friendly atmosphere and the staff's empathy and commitment to their patients' improvement. One person chose WPTS because it was the most accessible resource, offering the earliest appointment post-diagnosis — and that it was the most accommodating to a commuter's schedule. Others cite the instruction and education received about their conditions. And one, quite simply, says, "Thank you for putting me back together!"



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Number of Employees: 15

Top Executive: E. Thomas Willett, PT, EdM, LPT, director/owner

Product or Service: Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation as well as Wellness Services

Year founded: 1986