

American Physical Therapy Association



Spooner Health System Employees
Marietta Steiner, PTA, Shalla Acker, PT, Catherine Hewitt, PT

Physical therapists from Spooner Health System (SHS) played key roles at the recent Minnesota American Physical Therapy Association (MAPTA) conference in Duluth.

Catherine Hewitt has been a physical therapist at SHS for nearly two years and a member of MAPTA since 1973. She has been on the conference committee since the mid 1980's and co-chaired the 2009 Fall Conference in Duluth. "We broke a record this year, having the largest number of attendees we've ever had at a fall conference. It was very successful thanks to both the participants and the workshop speakers."

Shalla Acker, PT, led a workshop at the conference titled, "Fibromyalgia Syndrome: A Research and Clinical Based Treatment Protocol." She presented all the new research advances in the past 15 years showing Fibromyalgia Syndrome (FMS) as a central nervous system problem, not a psychological one. Practice labs allowed therapists to learn how to treat patients with FMS without flaring them up. Safe exercise techniques for patients with FMS were also shared with the participants. Acker has been a physical therapist at SHS for 23 years and has taken many continuous education courses in the area of Fibromyalgia.

SHS Physical Therapy Assistant, Marietta Steiner, also attended the conference. Marietta, employed at SHS for 2 ½ years, states, "The conference is very beneficial and offers a lot of new ideas to bring back to Spooner, ultimately impacting the quality of care we are able to provide our patients."

Sue Zieke, a member of the Spooner community, was asked to present an art exhibit at the conference. She shares her artwork with various groups—FMS support groups, in-service attendees, county boards, and hospital employees. Those who do not have Fibromyalgia often leave with a much greater sense of the reality of this disease.