

Julie Johnson, M.D., leads medical study at Children's Care

Dr. Julie A. Johnson, Medical Director of Rehabilitation Programs at Children's Care Hospital & School, led Children's Care in a study published in the November 2007 issue of Pediatric Physical Therapy. This study also involved Children's Care physical therapist Lois Vogel, MS, PT, PCS, and researchers from North Carolina, Virginia, Delaware, Ohio, and Pennsylvania who are members of the North American Growth in Cerebral Palsy Project (NAGCePP).

The purpose of this study was to study how much weight children bore while using therapeutic standers. Standers are used by physical therapists for children who use wheelchairs to strengthen and stretch the legs. The issue of bone density is important, as thinning bones increase the chance of fracture. With the permission of their families, nineteen students at Children's Care were measured for the amount of weight they actually bore while in standing devices, the study showed that actual weight borne in standers varies considerably, and concluded that clinicians should take care to ensure that children are getting the full benefits of the exercise.

"This was a natural follow-up to the bone density study we published in December 2005 in the Journal of Pediatrics," says Dr. Johnson, who is also an associate professor of pediatrics at the Sanford School of Medicine. "Increasing the bone density in our non-ambulatory children is critical for their long term health. The results of this study will be relevant and useful to therapists and physicians treating children with CP."

This study involved no out-of-the-ordinary practices. "We are proud to have Dr. Johnson and Lois Vogel asking the questions and studying the possibilities that can make life better for our students and all children," says Children's Care CEO Dianna Rajski.



(Left to Right) Lois Vogel, MS, PT, PCS and Julie Johnson M.D.



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