

# GUIDE TO NCH REHABILITATION SERVICES



## **Physical Therapy (PT)**

Physical therapy focuses on restoring and optimizing mobility, strength, balance, coordination, and functional movement. PT addresses pain management, post-surgical or injury rehabilitation, neurological conditions, gait training, endurance, and injury prevention. Interventions may include therapeutic exercise, manual therapy, balance and vestibular training, gait and functional mobility training, and patient education.

## **Occupational Therapy (OT)**

Occupational therapy helps patients regain independence in daily activities and improve upper extremity function, fine motor skills, and adaptive strategies. OT interventions may address self-care (dressing, bathing, feeding), household or work tasks, fine motor coordination, energy conservation, and adaptive equipment or environmental modifications. Therapy focuses on functional outcomes that are meaningful to the patient's everyday life.

## **Speech-Language Pathology (SLP)**

Speech-language pathology evaluates and treats communication, swallowing, and cognitive-communication disorders. SLP addresses speech clarity, language comprehension and expression, social communication, voice disorders, swallowing function, and cognitive deficits such as attention, memory, and executive function. Therapy may include exercises, compensatory strategies, education, and instrumental assessments to support safe and effective communication and oral intake.

## **Referral Considerations for PT, OT, and SLP**

To support optimal therapy outcomes, referrals should include the patient's diagnosis, the reason for referral, and the patient's functional goals—what they hope to achieve through therapy—along with any relevant medical or surgical history and demographic information. Providing this information enables therapists to tailor interventions, set realistic goals, and maximize the effectiveness of rehabilitation. Whenever possible, confirm the patient's interest and readiness to participate prior to referral.



# Specialty Therapy Areas

## **Aquatic Therapy (Patient Care Center - Gorham)**

Aquatic therapy is performed in a heated pool to promote mobility, strength, balance, and functional activity. The buoyancy of water reduces joint stress and weight-bearing demands, making movement more accessible for patients with pain, weakness, or mobility limitations. Therapy may include gait training, balance exercises, strengthening, and functional task practice, with water providing resistance, support, and sensory feedback to enhance rehabilitation outcomes.

## **Bedside Swallow Evaluation (AVH, WMC, UCVH)**

A clinical assessment of swallowing function to identify signs of aspiration, oral and pharyngeal deficits, and risk of dysphagia. The evaluation guides diet modifications, compensatory strategies, and need for further instrumental assessment or therapy.

## **Certified Hand Therapy (CHT) Program (UCVH)**

Provides advanced, post-professional training in the evaluation and treatment of upper-extremity conditions including the hand, wrist, elbow, and shoulder. Education emphasizes evidence-based occupational therapy interventions, post-surgical and non-surgical rehabilitation, custom orthosis fabrication, tendon and nerve injury management, arthritis care, trauma, and return-to-function outcomes. Therapists completing this program are trained to manage complex upper-extremity diagnoses and collaborate closely with referring physicians and surgeons to optimize functional recovery and patient-specific goals. Refer patients with hand or upper-extremity injuries, post-operative conditions, nerve or tendon involvement, stiffness, pain, or functional limitations impacting daily activities or work performance.

## **Certified Lactation Counselor (AVH)**

Provides comprehensive support for breastfeeding and postpartum musculoskeletal concerns, including maternal posture, pain management, and

infant feeding mechanics. Early conservative interventions such as manual therapy and ultrasound may address issues like clogged ducts or mastitis. Therapy includes education and collaboration with medical providers to optimize feeding and recovery outcomes

## **Cognitive Therapy (AVH, WMC, UCVH)**

The purpose is to assess and treat deficits in attention, memory, executive function, and problem-solving. Interventions aim to improve daily functioning, safety, and independence in tasks requiring thinking, planning and decision-making.

## **Communication Therapy (AVH, WMC, UCVH)**

The purpose is to evaluate and treat speech, language, and social communication disorders. Therapy addresses clarity, comprehension, expression, and functional communication to improve interaction and participation in daily life.

## **Concussion Management (AVH, WMC, UCVH)**

Addresses multi-system effects of mild traumatic brain injury, including balance deficits, dizziness, headaches, visual or cognitive changes, and exercise intolerance. Therapy may include vestibular, cervical, and ocular motor training, graded aerobic conditioning, and symptom-guided activity progression. Interventions are individualized to support safe return to daily activities, school, or sport.

## **Craniosacral Therapy (Patient Care Center - Gorham, UCVH)**

A gentle, hands-on manual approach that targets the craniosacral system, including the skull, spine, and sacrum. Therapists use light touch to assess and release restrictions in the fascia and connective tissues to improve fluid movement, reduce tension, and support the body's self-regulation. It is often used as an adjunct to address chronic pain, headaches, stress-related conditions, and neuromuscular dysfunction.

## **Dry Needling**

### **(Patient Care Center - Gorham, UCVH)**

A technique in which thin, filiform needles are inserted into muscle trigger points or tight muscles to reduce pain and improve muscle function. The goal is to release tension, decrease muscle spasms, improve range of motion, and promote tissue healing. It is commonly used for musculoskeletal pain, overuse injuries, chronic myofascial dysfunction, and sports. Dry needling is often combined with other therapeutic interventions to optimize functional outcomes.

## **Fascial Counterstrain**

### **(AVH)**

A gentle manual therapy approach that identifies and treats deep fascial and neuromuscular restrictions throughout the body. It targets areas contributing to pain and impaired function, such as the spine, rib cage, pelvis, and cranium. Skilled, passive positioning techniques are used to reduce abnormal tissue signaling and trapped inflammation, while promoting functional improvement and tissue healing by restoring circulation to dysfunctional tissues. Clinical effects often include decreased pain and inflammation, improved mobility, muscle tone, and functional performance.

## **Fiberoptic Endoscopic Evaluation of Swallowing (FEES)**

### **(AVH, WMC, UCVH)**

An instrumental assessment that visualizes pharyngeal and laryngeal function during swallowing. It identifies aspiration, penetration, residue, and specific physiological deficits. Findings guide recommendations for diet modifications, compensatory strategies, and targeted swallowing therapy to ensure safe and effective oral intake.

## **Functional Capacity Evaluation (FCE)**

### **(AVH)**

Comprehensive assessment of a patient's physical work abilities in accordance with Department of Labor Standards and the Dictionary of Occupational Titles. FCEs may be performed as a baseline assessment, to support return-to-work decision-making, or to assist with disability determination. Evaluations are customized based on diagnosis and purpose, typically requiring 3-4 hours. Results provide objective data to guide safe and appropriate work participation.

## **Graston Technique® Therapy**

### **(Patient Care Center - Gorham, WMC, UCVH)**

Graston Technique® is an instrument-assisted soft tissue mobilization method designed to identify and treat scar tissue, adhesions, and fascial restrictions. Using specialized stainless-steel instruments, therapists mobilize soft tissue, improve circulation, stimulate healing, and restore

range of motion. It is commonly applied in musculoskeletal injuries, post-surgical rehabilitation, chronic pain, and restricted movement, helping patients regain function and reduce discomfort. Education and exercise are combined with the technique to reinforce long-term benefits

## **High School Athlete Training Clinic**

### **(WMC)**

Weeks Physical Therapists and Physical Therapist Assistants provide weekly assessments and exercise support for student athletes at White Mountains Regional High School and Groveton High School. The therapy team works closely with each school's Athletic Director and, when needed, with the athletes' parents and primary care providers. This service is offered at no cost to the schools, helping support the health, safety, and performance of local student athletes

## **Home Safety Evaluation**

### **(AVH, WMC)**

Assesses the home environment to identify environmental factors that may contribute to falls, injury, or functional limitations within the home. The assessment evaluates mobility, transfers, and access to essential areas, such as stairs, bathrooms, and entryways. Recommendations may include adaptive equipment, home modifications, and strategies to enhance safety and independence.

## **LSVT BIG for Parkinson's Disease**

### **(AVH)**

A program that focuses on large-amplitude movements to counteract small, slow movements seen in Parkinson's disease. It improves mobility, balance, gait, and functional motor tasks. Exercises encourage exaggerated, purposeful movements to enhance daily function.

## **LSVT LOUD for Parkinson's Disease**

### **(AVH, WMC, UCVH)**

A program that focuses on increasing vocal loudness and improving communication. It trains patients to speak with a stronger, clearer voice while also addressing articulation, intonation, and speech intelligibility.

## **Lymphedema Management**

### **(AVH, WMC)**

The goal is to reduce swelling, improve function, prevent complications, and support long-term self-care. Treatment follows Complete Decongestive Therapy, including manual lymphatic drainage, compression, therapeutic exercise, and skin care education. Patients are trained in self-management strategies such as compression garment use, home exercises, and techniques to reduce infection risk and maintain limb health.

**McKenzie Method  
(Mechanical Diagnosis and Therapy)  
(AVH, WMC)**

A patient-centered approach for evaluating and treating musculoskeletal conditions, particularly of the spine and extremities. It uses repeated movements and positional testing to identify patterns that worsen or relieve symptoms, guiding classification and targeted treatment. Therapy focuses on exercises and postural strategies to centralize pain, improve mobility, and prevent recurrence, with an emphasis on patient self-management for long-term function

**Modified Barium Swallow Study (MBSS)  
(AVH)**

A radiographic evaluation of oral, pharyngeal, and upper esophageal phases of swallowing . It identifies aspiration, penetration, bolus flow abnormalities, and specific swallowing deficits. Results guide individualized treatment plans, including diet modifications, compensatory strategies, and targeted swallowing therapy to improve safety and efficiency of oral intake.

**Myofascial Release  
(Patient Care Center - Gorham, UCVH)**

A hands-on manual therapy technique used to stretch and release restrictions in the connective tissue surrounding muscles and organs. Gentle, sustained pressure is applied to improve tissue mobility, reduce pain, and restore functional movement. It is commonly used for musculoskeletal pain, postural dysfunction, and chronic soft tissue restrictions.

**Pelvic Health Specialist  
(AVH)**

Evaluates and treats pelvic floor and related musculoskeletal conditions affecting bowel, bladder, sexual function, and pelvic pain. Care includes internal and external assessment, manual therapy, therapeutic exercise, neuromuscular re-education, and patient education. Therapy aims to restore function and improve quality of life across all genders and life stages.

**Pregnancy and Postpartum Support  
(AVH, UCVH)**

Addresses musculoskeletal and pelvic floor conditions related to pregnancy, childbirth, and postpartum recovery. Services include management of pelvic pain, incontinence, diastasis recti, birth preparation and postpartum rehabilitation. Therapy uses individualized exercises, manual therapy, and patient education to support safe return to daily activity

**Pulmonary Rehab  
(WMC)**

Weeks Medical Center offers a personalized outpatient occupational therapy program designed for people with lung-related conditions. During therapy sessions, patients work on exercises designed to help improve or maintain their heart and lung endurance. Patients also learn practical ways to save energy, simplify daily tasks, and use helpful equipment so they can stay as independent and active as possible in their everyday lives.

**Splinting – Custom and Prefabricated  
(AVH, WMC, UCVH)**

Used to support healing, protect injured structures, improve function, and manage pain or deformity. Custom splints are individually molded directly to the patient, allowing precise positioning and accommodation of unique anatomy, surgical precautions, or deformities. Prefabricated splints are off-the-shelf and adjustable. In both cases, education is provided on proper wear, skin care, and use of the splint to maximize effectiveness and safety.

**Tai Chi  
(Patient Care Center - Gorham)**

A low-impact, movement-based therapy that improves balance, strength, coordination, flexibility, and body awareness. Exercises emphasize controlled, purposeful movements that can reduce fall risk and improve postural stability. Tai Chi is particularly beneficial for older adults and patients with neurological or musculoskeletal conditions and can be incorporated alongside conventional therapy to enhance functional mobility and overall physical performance.

**Therapeutic Pain Specialist  
(Patient Care Center - Gorham)**

A Therapeutic Pain Specialist provides pain science-informed physical therapy for patients with chronic, complex, or persistent pain conditions. Care integrates education, graded exposure, and active movement-based rehabilitation to improve function, confidence, and self-management. Treatment may include Pain Neuroscience Education, Graded Motor Imagery, postural and movement assessment, and selective manual therapy as indicated. Conditions addressed include chronic musculoskeletal pain, spine-related pain, complex regional pain syndrome (CRPS), headaches, temporomandibular disorders (TMD), and sports-related injuries. The goal is to reduce pain, restore function, and promote long-term rehabilitation success

### **Torticollis and Plagiocephaly (AVH)**

These often occur together in infants, as tightness in the neck muscles (torticollis) can cause a baby to consistently hold their head in one position, leading to flattening of one area of the skull (plagiocephaly). This limited neck motion can affect head shape, facial symmetry, and overall movement patterns. Early intervention with physical therapy focuses on improving neck range of motion, strengthening, positioning, and caregiver education to promote symmetrical movement and reduce pressure on flattened areas. Timely treatment can help improve head shape, neck mobility, and support typical motor development

### **Vestibular Rehabilitation (AVH, WMC, UCVH)**

The focus is on disorders of the inner ear and balance system that cause dizziness, vertigo, or imbalance. Treatment typically includes vestibular rehabilitation exercises to improve gaze stability, postural control, and spatial orientation, as well as habituation and adaptation strategies to reduce symptoms. Therapy aims to improve balance, reduce symptoms, and support safe functional mobility.

### **Visceral Manipulation Technique (Patient Care Center - Gorham)**

A manual therapy technique that addresses mobility and motility restrictions of the internal organs and their associated connective tissues. Treatment focuses on restoring normal visceral glide and reducing abnormal tension that may contribute to musculoskeletal pain, postural dysfunction, and impaired movement patterns. This intervention is incorporated as part of a comprehensive care plan to support pain reduction, functional improvement, and optimal movement mechanics.

### **Wound Care and Diabetic Wound Care (AVH)**

Physical therapy evaluation and treatment of acute or chronic wounds, including diabetic foot ulcers. Interventions include debridement, dressing selection, offloading, application and management of negative pressure wound therapy (wound vac), and patient education to promote healing, prevent infection, and restore function. Therapy emphasizes strategies to reduce recurrence and complications.

### **Wheelchair Evaluation (AVH, WMC, UCVH)**

Wheelchairs and power-operated vehicles (scooters) are durable medical equipment and must be medically necessary for use in the home. Patients must have significant mobility limitations that interfere with activities of daily living. Evaluations guide selection of appropriate devices and ensure safe and effective mobility. Recommendations may include training and education for device use and maintenance. WMC offers in home visit with ATP from a DME vendor in the state.

### **Workplace Ergonomics (AVH, WMC, UCVH)**

Ergonomic services are focused on preventing workplace injury and improving employee comfort and safety. Individualized recommendations are made to optimize body mechanics and functional positioning. Interventions may include workstation modification, adaptive solutions, and education to reduce strain and support long-term musculoskeletal health. WMC offers Hospital and clinic workplace ergonomics only, not a community service.

*Services as of 2/23/2026*



Androscoggin Valley Hospital  
North Country Home Health & Hospice Agency  
Upper Connecticut Valley Hospital  
Weeks Medical Center