

## Eli's Rehab Report

### Business Strategies: Snag Moneymaking Opportunities in Rehab by Thinking Outside the Box

Example: Pilates-based PT may attract more than just those who need rehab.

With a growing wellness-focused society -- and patients coming to you with exercise prescriptions (see the story on the previous page) -- you're looking at a plethora of business models from medically-oriented gyms to contracting dance therapy services. Even better, these out-of-the-box rehab delivery methods may bring in more cash than you'd expect.

Consider the Unconventional

Have a passion for more creative ways to incorporate rehab? With the right business plan, you can work it into your practice -- and even draw healthy customers willing to pay out-of-pocket for a good workout. Check out the following ideas your fellow PTs have cooked up and are currently cashing in on:

- Pilates. Mischa Abshire, PT, DPT, OCS, is a partner with InsideOut Body Therapies, a PT-focused Pilates studio in Durham, N.C. "Our highly-trained staff is committed to helping clients realize their fitness, rehabilitation, pain management, and health goals with a particular emphasis on moving the body," she says.

This kind of model also attracts well customers who just want a place to do Pilates with trained professionals.

- Dance therapy. "I knew a PT who was a dancer and wanted to work with children and adults with developmental and movement issues with a PT focus," recalls **Lynn Steffes, PT**, president of Steffes & Associates, in New Berlin, Wis. "Instead of building a studio, she packaged her services and inserted herself in a number of different facilities."
- Hippotherapy. Stable Possibilities in Lenox Twp, Mich., incorporates occupational therapy with hippotherapy, a modality that uses the movement of a horse to help rehabilitate people with sensory, and motor deficits, as well as developmental disabilities. "All three professional associations (AOTA, ASHA, APTA) have published articles and recognize the use of the horse as a treatment tool by professionally trained/registered therapists," according to Stable Possibilities' Web site.
- **'MOG' model.** **Russell A. Certo, PT, OCS**, founded the MOG®, or a "Medically-Oriented Gym" in Grand Island, N.Y. that offers PT, PT-focused exercise, and other cash-generating services. Certo gets regular PT referrals, many for exercise prescriptions, and when the patient is independent, he offers them a free month membership to his MOG. The kicker: "Forty percent of those referred to us (diabetic, obese, hypertensive) stay with us," Certo cheers. GYROTONIC, rolfing, massage therapy, acupuncture, tai chi, and The Pilates Center's Teacher Training Program," Abshire says.

As you explore the limitless possibilities of incorporating PT into wellness programs, look at other health and wellness colleagues as partners, not competitors, Steffes suggests. "In addition to the MOG model, I've seen spas with wellness and fitness models that incorporate physical therapy services," Steffes says.

Key: Whatever you decide to do, "don't wait for the customers to come to you -- PTs [as well as OTs and SLPs] need to put themselves out there to the customers," Steffes insists.