

## Eli's Rehab Report

### NEWS BRIEFS: See How You Can Lend a Hand to Haiti

As the dust settles over devastated Haiti, you may have heard that one of the country's biggest healthcare needs is for physical and occupational therapists. And there's more than one way to help out.

"We are aware of some occupational therapy students who have been to Haiti and are contacting them to get more information," said American Occupational Therapy Association President **Penelope A. Moyers, EdD, OTR/L, BCMH, FAOTA**, in a statement. "Because the devastation is so significant, it may take a while for nonemergency volunteers to be dispatched."

AOTA, however, will keep abreast of any international efforts the World Federation of Occupational Therapists (WFOT) is taking in response to the earthquake. Meanwhile, AOTA encourages its members to check out the InterAction Web site, [www.interaction.org/how-help](http://www.interaction.org/how-help) to monitor different overseas volunteer opportunities. You may also check out AOTA's Web site on Haiti efforts at [www.aota.org/News/AOTANews/Haiti.aspx](http://www.aota.org/News/AOTANews/Haiti.aspx).

If traveling is out of the question, "...we encourage our members to donate if they are able to the many legitimate charities gathering resources," Moyers said. "On behalf of our members, AOTA is donating to the American Red Cross to support their efforts in Haiti."

Physical therapists can research ways to help by visiting [www.apta.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Media&Template=/CM/HTMLDisplay.cfm&ContentID=68685](http://www.apta.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Media&Template=/CM/HTMLDisplay.cfm&ContentID=68685).

Important: The American Physical Therapy Association also "urges extreme caution" for travelers and "strongly advises" that volunteers

- be part of an established, well-organized team with ties on the ground in Haiti;
- be part of a group with access to adequate supplies, food, water, and other necessities;
- be with a group with adequate security measures; and
- have prior experience with large-scale, severe disasters.