

# PRIME TIMES

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AboutElderCare.org | (918) 336-8500  
1223 Swan Drive, Bartlesville, OK 74006



# May is Speech-Language-Hearing Month

by Angie Thompson, Director of Development

The National Association for Hearing and Speech Action (NAHSA) has announced that starting in 2024, May will be recognized as National Speech-Language-Hearing Month instead of Better Hearing and Speech Month, which was initiated by NAHSA in 1972. The focus on speech and hearing during May is to educate the public about the importance of human communication and what we can all do to prevent and address communication disorders.

At Foundation Therapy Specialists, Abby Petermann, SLP, provides expertise in speech therapy for adults in recovery, rehab, or other therapies. She also provides counseling and educational therapy for couples and families working through communication dynamics. During couples sessions, Abby notices partners being argumentative and defensive with each other, blaming each other for their communication breakdowns instead of working as a team to overcome diagnosed impairments. This goes both for hearing impairment and speech impairment and can often be compounded by one partner having one and the other partner having the other. Abby provides strategies for environmental modifications, speaker strategies, and listener strategies to support conversation.

She also educates them on the importance of wearing hearing tech 100% of the time and



making sure they are working with an audiologist regularly to ensure proper programming. Both parties must be on board, understand and recognize their partner's relative impairments as being a diagnosed medical disorder, and be willing to try the strategies for success actively.

If you're interested in working with Abby in speech therapy, ask your physician to make a referral. You can also call Heather to schedule an appointment. Foundation Therapy is located inside Elder Care. Call (918) 766-0391 for more information.

**SENIORS  
CONNECT**

**What are You Missing?**

Wednesday, May 22 @ 3 pm | FREE | Call (918) 336-8500  
Features Andrea Wagner, AuD with Advanced Hearing  
Specialists & Abigail Petermann, M.S., CCC-SLP, Speech-  
Language Pathologist with Foundation Therapy Specialists

# Ask the professional

by Abigail Petermann, SLP, Foundation Therapy Specialists



**Q** My dad wears hearing aids, and it's difficult to communicate with him. I often get frustrated when I have to repeat things to him. He says I talk too fast, but I try to speak loudly and clearly. Do you

have any suggestions to help me speak in a way that he can understand me the first time?

**A** It is important for both parties to understand what factors are truly at play here. You probably DON'T speak too quickly, but your husband's hearing loss is causing him to miss important speech-related information such that he PERCEIVES your speech to be less clear.

If his hearing aids don't seem to be helping, there are two likely possibilities: first, that he needs to return to his audiologist for further programming to make sure he can get all the auditory information he can from his aids; second, that his hearing loss has progressed beyond what a hearing aid can effectively correct, which is a situation that your audiologist will be able to explain and provide options for.

Here are some basic strategies to improve your communication with each other in the meantime:

-Reduce both auditory and visual “noise” in your environment when speaking with each other. This includes TV, radio, and running appliances such as a dishwasher or fan.

-Have conversations face to face. Stop what you are doing and look at each other until you are done with the conversation.

-Speaker: Slightly increase how loud you are talking. This typically also results in a slower speaking rate as well as somewhat more exaggerated speech sounds. Just focusing on the volume can have an exponential impact on how well your partner can understand you.

-Listener: Repeat what you understand, stop your partner as soon as you missed something, and be specific about what you missed. Don't just say “What?,” but instead ask a specific question: “We are going to dinner at WHAT TIME?” or “We are going WHERE for dinner?”

Join Abby and Andrea Wagner, AuD, on May 22 @ 3pm for a seminar on the subject of speech and hearing. Call (918) 336-8500 to RSVP.

# IN-HOME

## HOUSEKEEPING & ERRAND SERVICE

- Perform essential shopping & errands
- Assist with meal preparation
- Clean & sanitize the kitchen & bathroom
- Wash dishes, dust furniture, sweep, mop, & vacuum floors
- Change bed sheets (non-bedfast clients)
- Assist with laundry . . . and more



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# TMJ – more than a jaw problem

by Josh Lindblom, DPT, PT, Director of Therapy

The temporomandibular joint (TMJ) is among the most active joints in your body. It works as a sliding hinge connecting your mandible or jaw with the temporal aspect of your cranium. The TMJ is utilized for all activities that involve mouth opening, i.e., eating and speaking. Initially, jaw motion is solely rotational but requires forward mandibular translation to achieve full opening. Like other synovial joints in your body, the TMJ requires synovial fluid as lubrication to function correctly.

Contrary to other joints in the body, the TMJ is a convex-on-convex joint and thus requires a disc similar to those in your spine to create appropriate concavity, further reduce friction, and assist in mandibular translation. The disc creates two synovial joints within the TMJ: one between the mandible and the disc and one between the disc and the articular eminence of the temporal bone. This disc is suspended between connective tissue posteriorly and the pterygoid muscles anteromedially and slides with the mandible as it moves forward. This mechanism requires a delicate balance between the disc, muscles, and bone position for smooth operation.

There are several common methods to manage TMJ pain. Patients will complain of joint clicking or popping, jaw pain, tenderness, earache, difficulty chewing, facial pain, severe headache, or even a locked jaw. They are often prescribed muscle relaxers or pain medication. Many acquire dental splints to reduce muscle activity at rest, limiting bruxism at night. Therapists often perform stretching and soft tissue mobilization to help relax tight muscles. It's important

to note that these treatments help in many cases but are often incomplete.

The Rocabado approach to treating TMJ pain works to restore balance and centric relation to the entire system. Dr. Rocabado's approach demands consideration of all of the anatomy involved. This includes all of the above structures with the key addition of the upper cervical spine, recognizing that each structure affects the others. If your neck is out of alignment, you will likely overcompensate with postural musculature, or your cranium will also be out of alignment. Additionally, the trigeminal nerve responsible for sensation and motor control of the face and mandible originates in the spinal nerves of the upper cervical spine. The spine must be in appropriate alignment to allow proper nerve function and optimally support the cranium. If your cranium is out of alignment, your TMJ will not be in the optimal position for function. Head position and posture matter and should be considered for best outcomes.

TMJ pain can be a complex and debilitating condition, but you don't have to face it alone. Foundation Therapy Specialists, with their expertise and dedication, are here to help you find relief. Our physical therapists are skilled in assessing and treating improper upper cervical spine alignment, using graded mobilizations and TMJ specific exercises. We also offer therapeutic modalities such as moist heat, electrical stimulation, and pulsed ultrasound, all of which have shown positive results. If you or someone you know could benefit from our specialized treatment, please don't hesitate to contact us at 918-766-0391 to schedule an evaluation.

# Elder Care staff receive state-wide training

Elder Care announced recently that their staff has received the Dementia-Friendly Oklahoma training and is certified as a Dementia-Friendly Oklahoma Partner.

Employees received training regarding recognizing signs of dementia and assisting individuals.

Over 70,000 Oklahomans are currently living with Alzheimer's disease, with many of them living in our own community. Bettering our understanding of dementia and dementia friendly practices helps these individuals – our friends, family, and neighbors – stay engaged as active and valued members of our community. We are proud that our organization embraced this initiative to become a partner with the Oklahoma Department of Health.

The Dementia-Friendly Oklahoma training and recognition program is part of the Oklahoma Healthy Brain initiative program that seeks to promote brain health, address cognitive impairment, and address the needs of caregivers. The initiative is focused on improving early detection and diagnosis of cognitive impairment, increasing awareness and education, reducing risk, and preventing comorbidities.

Elder Care is uniquely positioned in the community to serve as a place where all older adults can feel welcome, and find valuable resources and support. As a senior-serving organization, the staff at Elder Care are more

likely to encounter clients who are living with Alzheimer's or dementia, so understanding the signs how to engage with these individuals in a helpful way is especially important.

The state-wide initiative hopes that community members living with cognitive decline will benefit from this designation, as they will know they have an organization they can go to where they will be welcomed, treated with respect, and can find assistance.

To prepare for the community interaction, DFO partners must have the majority of their staff undergo the Dementia Friendly Work @ Health training, a one hour training program covering topics such as: recognizing clients who may be dealing with dementia, how to communicate with and assist people living with dementia, and creating a dementia friendly physical environment. Prospective partners must then complete the online DFO application. The Dementia Friendly Oklahoma training and recognition program is housed within the Oklahoma State Department of Health's Oklahoma Healthy Brain Initiative program.



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# Board Highlight

John is a native Bartian and a graduate of Bartlesville High School. He attended Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri, and earned his bachelor's degree in business administration. He carried his family business – Gorman Construction Company – to its fourth generation. Gorman Construction has built many iconic buildings in Bartlesville.



John Gorman  
*Elder Care Board member*

John became quite familiar with Elder Care through his primary care physician, Dr. Jarrell, who was on staff at Elder Care.

"I have always had a lot of respect for the organization because of the services they provide," John revealed, "I think Elder Care is a great organization with programs that I believe Bartlesville needs – for all adults and not just the elderly."

As a dedicated community advocate, John serves as the president of the YMCA board and is a member of the Youth & Family Services board. In his leisure time, he enjoys snow skiing with friends, and has a passion for classic cars, including his 1965 Buick Rivera two-door coupe, 1966 Lincoln Continental, and 1978 Corvette.

When it comes to Elder Care, John said he appreciates "all the services available for the community, but specifically physical therapy, the medical clinic, and the education programs for the community on topics such as Alzheimer's and how to manage that disease." John encourages those considering Elder Care's services to inquire to the best fit for you. He also encourages community members to give financially.

Learn more about the various programs available to adults 60 and older by calling (918) 336-8500 or visiting our website: [AboutElderCare.org](http://AboutElderCare.org).

# This Month's Donors

In appreciation of contributions to Elder Care in April 2024

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