



Linda Elkins of Pollard is again able to enjoy one of her favorite hobbies – playing the piano – thanks to her work with Occupational Therapist Todd Sanders at AMMC.

Patient sings praises of AMMC Occupational Therapy

Just a few days before the beginning of Daylight Savings Time, Linda Elkins spoke like a woman ready to spring forward.

“I lost a whole year of my life,” she said of 2015. “I couldn’t work in the yard or do much of anything. This spring, I’m ready to go.”

Elkins broke her wrist in January of last year. The treatments she received elsewhere didn’t alleviate her pain or restore functionality, and by October -- when she underwent follow-up wrist surgery in Little Rock -- her spirits were flagging. After that surgery, she was referred to Occupational Therapist Todd Sanders at AMMC. And from the first meeting, she felt something new.

“I had hope,” she said. “And confidence.”

Sanders, an Occupational Therapist employed by Kindred Hospital Services, provides inpatient and outpatient therapy at AMMC.

“I could tell a difference right away,” Elkins said of Sanders’ work with her. “Each time, I could move my fingers a little more.”

For a woman who's been playing the piano for 55 years, regaining flexibility and function in her fingers wasn't just good -- it was a godsend. Elkins has been able to resume playing piano for her church, Harmony Southern Baptist Church near Pollard.

"That's what occupational therapy is about," Sanders said. "We want to return them to something that is meaningful to the patient."

Part of Sanders' work with Elkins involved a fluidotherapy machine.

This equipment was purchased by The AMMC Foundation thanks to a donation from a patient with whom Sanders had worked previously.

With fluidotherapy, the patient puts his or her hand into a pile of sand-like material that is gradually warmed by the machine. The patient then works through a series of actions or exercises under Sanders' guidance.

"The fluidotherapy machine heats up the soft tissue of the hand and allows the joints to move more freely," Sanders said. "That allows people to exercise their hand with less pain."

More freedom of movement. Less hand pain. That sort of talk was music to Elkins' ears, and thanks to Sanders and the generosity of a donor to the AMMC Foundation, Elkins' music plays on for all to hear.



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