

Views From the E-List* – Pool Operations

Query:

We are going to be adding a small pool to our therapy clinic. What should I know about pool operations and how can I obtain that information?

Responses:

It is the belief of USA Swimming that anyone working or playing in the water should be knowledgeable about water chemistry. If you are responsible for other people while in the water you should learn more about the water than it just has salt and/chlorine in it.

Well after all the responses to this issue I have to say we have a great CPO that takes care of our pools, he also lifeguards when not doing CPO work. He has taken the CPO course through National Swimming Pool Foundation and recertifies as required. He shares information with us. All pool test information is readily available for any of us to check when needed. We have 3 other staff- a Physical Therapy Assistant, a WSI/Aquatics Instructor and myself The Aquatic and Fitness Programs Coordinator that know how to test the pools, add chemicals, vacuum & shock should our CPO be out on vacation or become sick. We also have yearly department in-services that I present for our department of about 25 people; Physical Therapist, PT Assistants, OT's OTA's, Athletic Trainers, Personal Trainers, Rehab Aides, Aquatic Fitness Instructors & Lifeguards on our facility rules/guidelines/precautions/contraindications & safety as well as periodic in-services on aquatic techniques/protocols/fitness/special populations, etc. (usually after I attend either an ATRI or AEA conference to share all that great info)

So, we all work together as a team and we really don't expect the therapists to know how to deal with pool chemicals, proper water & air quality, but they are familiar enough to tell someone when something doesn't seem right.

I remember several years ago when I was using a hotel pool for aquatic fitness classes and the pool was consistently not taken care of and in that situation all you can really do, if the person who is responsible for the pool doesn't take care of it properly even after being told of the problems, is leave and find another facility -it is the hotel's problem and I wouldn't put myself or my clients in that environment.

**Opinions and suggestions expressed in this column represent e-list member responses to the query posted. They are not represented by the Aquatic Therapy and Rehab Institute and/or the author(s) of this column as recommendations regarding appropriate practice.*