

# Parkinson's Disease Center of Excellence Newsletter



## Team Member Spotlight



### Taylor Rush, PhD

Dr. Rush is a clinical health psychologist and Director of Behavioral Services and Interdisciplinary Programs in the Center for Neurological Restoration (CNR)

at Cleveland Clinic. She graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in psychology from the University of Florida, a Master of Arts degree in clinical psychology from the Forest Institute and a PhD in clinical health psychology from East Carolina University. She came to Cleveland Clinic for a two-year fellowship program and was subsequently hired as a staff psychologist in 2015. She has been working with people who have Parkinson's disease since that time.

Dr. Rush has a background in chronic health conditions and how people can best cope with difficult physical symptoms. Her training prepared her to work alongside other medical professionals to provide comprehensive care to patients to ensure they have all the tools possible to cope with their medical conditions. In her current role, she oversees behavioral services provided by the CNR team of psychologists, social workers and psychiatry providers. Her team sees patients with many different types of movement disorders, including those with Parkinson's disease. She helps patients learn how to: adjust to their diagnoses, cultivate social support, communicate effectively with loved ones and medical providers, manage symptoms of depression and anxiety, emotionally prepare for surgery (such as deep brain stimulation), get better sleep, adjust expectations for functional abilities, and practice relaxation strategies to promote physical and emotional wellness.

### Q&A with Dr. Rush

**Why is it important for me to take care of my mental health when other aspects of my Parkinson's disease management already take so much time?**

Emotional health is vital to successful coping with Parkinson's disease. Depression can affect up to 50% of people with Parkinson's disease, and over 30% can experience symptoms of anxiety. These symptoms can affect many areas of your life. This includes healthy behaviors, such as engaging in exercise and hobbies, spending time with friends and family, and taking medication in a timely manner. When you don't do the activities that matter to you, quality of life takes a nosedive, which can then worsen depression and anxiety. Addressing these symptoms as they develop means that you can then enjoy your life more and not miss out on the things that matter.

**Parkinson's disease not only affects me, but my loved ones as well. I feel like they shelter me from how they feel. How can I bring this up?**

When my patients tell me they worry about the effects Parkinson's disease has on their loved ones, I encourage them to talk about it. It can help to verbalize the feelings you think they have. In some cases, their concerns are confirmed by their loved ones, and they can have a genuine conversation about how they can support one another and ask for help when needed. Other times, they find out their loved ones feel quite differently about how Parkinson's disease has affected them and it can lead to a helpful conversation about how the person actually feels so they can be on the same page. It is important to normalize talking about how you feel – don't protect each other from difficult emotions, as it can often make the situation more difficult.

**What resources are available for my loved ones who are supporting me?**

It is incredibly important for care partners to empower themselves with the right support and resources as they help their loved one through their Parkinson's disease journey. Without the right tools, it can make everything so much more difficult. As I tell my patients and their loved ones, why ford the river if there is a bridge? There are many resources available for education and support for Parkinson's disease care partners. This includes resources provided by the Parkinson's Foundation

([parkinson.org/resources-support/carepartners](https://parkinson.org/resources-support/carepartners)) as well as the Michael J. Fox Foundation ([michaeljfox.org/news/care-partners](https://michaeljfox.org/news/care-partners))

In addition, my wonderful colleague, Ellen Walter, APRN-CNP, and I created the Cleveland Clinic Care Partner U symposium in 2019. This is a half-day symposium for care partners to learn how to take care of themselves as well as support their loved one with Parkinson's disease. Our aim is for them to feel better equipped as a care partner and be able to talk to other care partners who are going through similar circumstances. We truly focus on how to enhance well-being, not just the nuts and bolts of being a good care partner. To give them peace of mind and so they can truly engage in the day, we have separate programming for their loved one with Parkinson's disease so that they can benefit from their own education sessions and physical activities. Our trained event volunteers take care of everything, including medication dosing, so that care partners can focus on how to best care for themselves. Our next Care Partner U will be held on Saturday, October 7, 2023.

### Fun Facts about Dr. Rush

*I grew up in rural central Florida, where I showed horses and goats. When I was 11, my LaMancha goat, Benita, won Grand Champion at the Marion County Fair. It was one of the proudest moments of my young life!*

*I have never learned how to play Solitaire, either with real cards or on a computer. I actively refuse to familiarize myself with it now just so I can always have it as a fun fact.*

*Like many others, I am fascinated by true crime, cult and medical documentaries. You might think that with my job, I'd get my fill of emotional intensity. However, the narratives of peoples' lives draw me in to these incredibly interesting and tragic stories. I remain perpetually fascinated by human behavior and how we think. It's how I know I will always love what I do!*

## Research Highlight

Interested in Parkinson's Disease Research at Cleveland Clinic? Here are three easy ways to learn more:

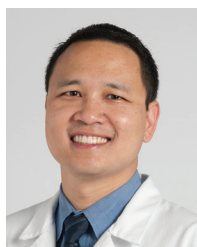
1. Ask your doctor/provider.
2. Contact the Center for Neurological Restoration at 216.442.2670 or [cnrresearchreferrals@ccf.org](mailto:cnrresearchreferrals@ccf.org).
3. Visit the Center for Neurological Restoration research website at [clevelandclinic.org/cnrresearch](http://clevelandclinic.org/cnrresearch) or scan the QR code.



## Comprehensive Assessment and Treatment Program for Parkinson's Disease (CARE-PD)



Adam Margolius, MD



Renato Samala, MD

The Care-PD clinic provides palliative treatment to individuals with advanced Parkinson's disease to help improve quality of life and plan for the future. The clinic focuses on the relief of distressing symptoms,

such as pain, depression, fatigue, constipation, nausea, loss of appetite, difficulty sleeping and anxiety.

Our team assists with symptom management, pain control, mental health management and planning for the future. The team provides information on advance care planning and is available



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### September 10 – InMotion's Pals In Motion 7th Annual Walk

More information: [beinmotion.org/pals](http://beinmotion.org/pals)

### October 7 – Cleveland Clinic's 4th Annual Care Partner U

More information coming soon.

### Virtual Caregiver Support Group

For care partners of chronic, progressive neurological diseases, including Parkinson's disease

**More information:** [clevelandclinic.org/caregiversupportgroup](http://clevelandclinic.org/caregiversupportgroup)

### First Tuesday of every month – Young Onset Parkinson's Support Group (currently at 59 years and younger)

**Register:** [clevelandclinic.org/yopdsupportgroup](http://clevelandclinic.org/yopdsupportgroup)

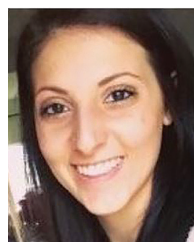
to collaborate with you on completing advance directives and discussing end-of-life wishes. The clinic also focuses on assisting the care partner by locating programs and resources in the community and arranging home care services, home health aide agency services, hospice care and more.

## Parkinson's Disease Center of Excellence Resource Center



The Parkinson's Foundation has a free online course for care partners titled "Care Partner Program: Building a Care Partnership." Go at your own pace and learn from healthcare professionals and other care partners. Visit [parkinson.org/resources-support/carepartners](http://parkinson.org/resources-support/carepartners) for more information about this course as well as many other resources available for care partners of individuals with Parkinson's disease.

## Tip for Living Well as a Care Partner



### From Kayla St. John, LISW

Care for yourself so you can feel confident in the care that you provide to others. Being a care partner can be difficult mentally, emotionally and physically. Care partners often feel it is tough to accept help or share these responsibilities with those who offer a hand. However, in order to successfully provide care to a loved one, you must also care for your own needs. We encourage you to reach out and connect with resources available to you to reduce your daily responsibilities and give you a moment to focus on yourself. Try to maintain activities that provide a break to you as the care partner and consider connecting with outside resources, such as caregiver support groups, to share and learn from other's experiences. Know that accepting help is difficult for many people but it can be invaluable. You are not alone in this experience!

**If you would like to view our previous newsletters, visit [clevelandclinic.org/empoweru](http://clevelandclinic.org/empoweru).**