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Tift Regional speech therapists host educational workshop

Photo Caption: (Left): Amy Bereiter, MS, CCC-SLP, ATP explains the benefits of using Augmentative Alternative Communication (AAC) technology in a workshop for speech professionals at the Musculoskeletal Center, a division of Tift Regional Health System. (Right): Pictured from left to right: Amy Bereiter (presenter), Rebekah Foster (Outpatient SLP), Jennifer Thomas (PRC AAC Device Rep for South GA), Christina Duron (Outpatient SLP), and Brenda Reeves (Outpatient SLP).

(2/13/20, Tifton, Ga.) – Outpatient speech therapists at Tift Regional’s Musculoskeletal Center recently held an educational workshop for speech language pathologists, occupational therapists, teachers, and parents who support individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Participants at this event were able to learn about using Augmentative Alternative Communication (AAC) technology and language fundamentals to promote communication for individuals who are nonverbal.

The workshop was led by Amy Bereiter, MS, CCC-SLP, ATP, a full-time speech language pathologist with the LAMP Center of Excellence in Northern Virginia, who works with and trains professionals on language development and AAC implementation in educational settings. The workshop was organized by Rebekah Foster, Christina Duron, and Brenda Reeves, who are all outpatient speech language pathologists at the Musculoskeletal Center, a division of Tift Regional Health System.

“We really wanted to welcome this group of professionals from around South Georgia to our facility here at the Musculoskeletal Center,” said Foster, MEd, CCC-SLP.

AAC is a technology aided form of communication for individuals who cannot rely on their own vocal speech to express their wants and needs. Someone who is working on developing expressive communication may use some form of AAC, like a speech output device, to produce words and sentences. AAC technology can be lifelong or temporary, depending on the severity of the individual.
“Being able to communicate in some form is a really empowering thing, and through the use of AAC, individuals who are nonverbal and their loved ones can really see that impact,” Foster said. “We thought it would be beneficial to bring this group of people together and provide more education on this that we hope will lead to enhanced communication for nonverbal individuals in our region.”

Drew Dorminey, Director of the Orthopedic Service Line for TRHS, said that they hope to have more educational workshops like this in the future at the Musculoskeletal Center on topics relevant to the various services housed in the facility. The center is currently home to Georgia Sports Medicine, the TRHS Arthritis and Osteoporosis Center, Neurology, the TRHS Pain Management Center, Chiropractic Services, and Outpatient Therapy Services.

### About Tift Regional Health System

Tift Regional Health System (TRHS) is a leading health care provider serving 12 counties in South Central Georgia. Tift Regional Medical Center (TRMC), the flagship hospital for TRHS, is a 181-bed regional referral center offering signature services in surgery, oncology, cardiovascular care, women’s health and more. TRHS comprises of TRMC and the TRMC West Campus in Tifton, Cook Medical Center and Cook Senior Living Center in Adel and Tift Regional Physician Group with clinics located throughout the region. Please visit www.tiftregional.com for more information.