

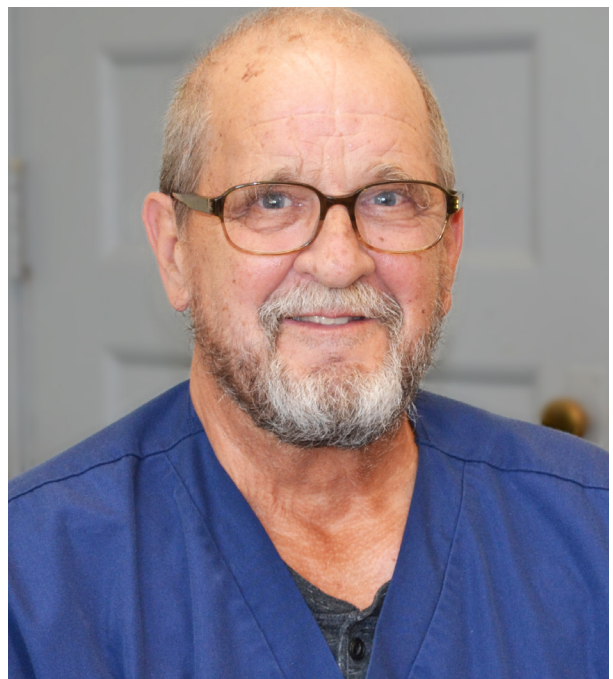
Why Bob Takes His Work on the Road for Easterseals Early Supports & Services

Every first Monday of the month, Robert Drillio rolls a dolly stacked with bins into Easterseals Early Supports & Services (ESS) on South Main Street in Manchester. Though he appears to be bringing enough tools and equipment for an HVAC repair, his blue scrubs indicate he's on another kind of call. Bob, called "Dr. Bob" and "Uncle Bob" by patients and parents at ESS, is headed to Room 7 to work with children and their families.

Bob is a certified orthotist visiting from IAM O&P, Inc., a company he founded in Woburn, Mass. in 2002. He fits patients at Easterseals as young as one and as old as 21 with orthopedic devices, or braces, that help improve mobility and quality of life. The ESS brace clinic is one of many clinics he holds at rehabilitation centers and hospitals in New Hampshire.

"My interest in doing this is so parents don't have to go all the way to Boston to be fitted for braces," Bob says. He sees what he does as a critical service, observing that the number of orthotics companies in the area has dwindled over the years.

Bob first began hosting brace clinics at ESS in 2012. Since then, he's worked alongside Easterseals NH pediatric physical therapist Donna Cordova to treat children with a variety of orthopedic conditions. On any given clinic day, Bob might see eight or nine



Robert "Bob" Drillio, certified orthotist, on a clinic visit to Easterseals Early Supports & Services.

patients. He'll perform evaluations, make repairs, make casts for new braces, and brainstorm ideas to improve upon a device design. His custom recommendations and designs for each client are informed by Donna's expertise.

To Bob, who's been working in the field of orthotics for 44 years, nothing is more important than finding the right solution for a patient. He'll eat costs, lose sleep, and get creative when necessary. The bottom line is "I'm taking care of that child," Bob says. "If



Bob with Donna Cordova, Easterseals NH Early Supports & Services pediatric physical therapist. Several of Bob's orthotics are displayed on the table.

there's one thing I've learned, it's never be satisfied with a standard design." He'll often come up with modifications to improve a brace in the middle of the night. "I'll wake up in the morning, head to my workshop to try it out, and it'll work," he says.

Bob's "anything is possible" attitude serves his patients and their parents well. "Parents need to understand why we're doing this. It's so their children can do what they want to do later, whether it's cheerleading or soccer or dancing," Bob says. Donna is proactive in sharing information about the necessity for braces with pediatricians, often suggesting an intervention before a prescription is handed down.

While many of Bob's patients at Easterseals are existing or former Early Supports & Services clients, there are some from the community at large. In some cases, he's even treated children of former patients. "I see the potential to take care of more kids up here, so they don't have to go down to Boston," he says.

"There's nothing better than when a kid comes in a wheelchair and leaves pushing his own chair," Bob says.