

FALL 2025

Letter from the President-Elect

New Volunteer Leaders

Unlock Your Expertise: APTA Federal
Preconference Sessions at CSM 2026

House of Delegates Approves Primary Care Specialty Certification:
A Win for Federal Physical Therapy

Nominations for APTA Federal Awards

TRICARE Disruptions Threaten Access to
Physical Therapy for Military Families

PTA Regulatory, Legislative, and
Payment Updates Webinar

APTA Federal Session Introductions & Booth Volunteers
Save the Date for CSM 2026

Phishing Scam Information

President

Andrea Crunkhorn, PT, DPT

Vice President

Joseph Kardouni, PT, DPT, PhD

Secretary

Renee Schroeder, PT, DPT

Treasurer

Stacy Pepitone, PT, DPT

Section Chief Delegate

Christy Gantt, PT, DPT

Section Delegate

Andrew Golden, PT, DPT, DSc

Executive Director

Catherine Langley, CAE

SERVICE REPRESENTATIVES

Air Force

Joel Henderson, PT, DPT
Benjamin Lowry, PT

Army

Jon Umlauf, PT, DPT, DSc
Jose Durbin, PT, DPT, DSc

Public Health Service

Steven Spoonemore, PT, DPT
Zavera Brandon, PT, DPT

Navy/Marines

Cortney Shewmaker, PT, DPT, ATC
Pollyanna Crane, PT, DPT

VA

Peter Glover, PT, DPT
Nicole Casagrand, PT, DPT

Defense Health Agency

Carrie Storer, PT, DPT
Kerry MacDonald PT, DSc

Federal Affairs Liaison

Rachel Winthrop, PTA

Program Chair

LCDR Laura Riebel, PT, DPT

Research Chair

Ignacio Gaunaurd, PT, PhD, MSPT

Membership Chair

Debra Ludwiczak-Henry, PTA

Communications Chair

Katie Qiu, PT, DPT



APTA FederalSM

A Section of the American
Physical Therapy Association

Note From Your President: A Fond Farewell and Warm Welcome

Dear APTA Federal Members,
As my term as APTA Federal Section President comes to an end, I am filled with immense gratitude and pride for all that we have accomplished together. It has been a true honor to serve this dedicated and talented community of physical therapy professionals working across our nation's federal agencies. Your commitment to excellence, innovation, and service is a constant source of inspiration.

This year's Combined Sections Meeting in Houston served as a powerful testament to our collective work. Under the theme "Everyone Has a Place," we showcased the unique contributions of federal physical therapists in areas like primary care, human performance optimization, and advanced amputation care. The educational sessions highlighted our members' critical role in advancing both clinical practice and professional development, including the growth of federal residency and fellowship programs.

Clinical Practice Chair

Rebecca Vogsland, PT, DPT

PTA Liaison

Joel Medina, PTA

Student Liaison

Matthew Glassoff, SPT

Section Historian

Pat McAdoo, PT, M.Ed

As I transition out of this leadership role, I am confident that the future of the APTA Federal Section is in excellent hands. It is my great pleasure to introduce and welcome **Joe Kardouni, PT, DPT, PhD**, as your incoming president. Joe has been a pillar of our leadership team, and his vision and dedication will undoubtedly continue to drive our section forward. Please join me in congratulating him and offering your full support.

Joe will be joined by other newly elected board members who are equally committed to advancing our mission and values. With their fresh perspectives and unwavering dedication, I am certain that our section will continue to thrive, breaking new ground in federal physical therapy practice, education, and advocacy.

Thank you for your trust and for the opportunity to lead this incredible group. I look forward to seeing all the great things our section will accomplish in the years to come.

Sincerely,

Andrea Crunkhorn, PT, DPT - APTA Federal President

Letter from President-Elect

It is a privilege and an honor to step into the role of president for the APTA Federal Section, and I want to extend my deepest thanks to Andrea Crunkhorn for her exceptional leadership and service. She has guided our section with remarkable vision and tireless dedication, and we owe her a debt of gratitude.

I am enthusiastic about the future and committed to building upon the strong foundation that previous leaders and dedicated members have established. I look forward to working closely with our newly elected board members to advocate for our unique needs and to expand our influence within the physical therapy profession and across the healthcare landscape.

I encourage all of you to stay engaged, participate in our special interest groups, and continue to push the boundaries of what is possible. Together, we will ensure that federal physical therapy remains at the forefront of patient care and professional innovation.

Sincerely,

Joe Kardouni, PT, DPT, PhD - APTA Federal Section President-Elect

New Volunteer Leaders

The APTA Federal team is absolutely thrilled to welcome our new and returning volunteer leaders starting in 2026!

President: Joseph Kardouni PT, PhD**Secretary:** Allison McKay Okruch PT, DPT**Communications Chair:** Alan Petrazzi PT**Air Force Representative:** Nicole Saulovich-Rogan, PT, DPT**Army Representative:** Casey Shutt-Hoblet PT, DPT**Navy/Marine Representative:** William C Stokes PT, DPT**Public Health Service Representative:** OPEN**Veterans Administration Representative:** Nicole Casagrand Johnston PT, DPT**Primary Care SIG Co-Chair:** Samantha S. Schmidt PT, MSPT**Primary Care SIG Communications Chair:** Jennifer C. Turner, PT, DPT**Primary Care SIG Education Co-Chair:** Nancy Henderson

We have an opening for the USPHS representative. Please email us at office@aptafederal.org to self-nominate or nominate a co-worker.

The 3rd Annual

PRIMARY CARE PT SUMMIT & THINK TANK

*Register
Now*



October 24-25, 2025
Savannah, Georgia



[https://aptafed.memberclicks.net/
2025summit?servId=20165#/](https://aptafed.memberclicks.net/2025summit?servId=20165#/)

**The Nation's leader in
Primary Care Physical Therapy**

Engaging format that not only educates but also stimulates your thinking. The topics range from addressing the needs of special populations to think tank discussions and innovative delivery methods. Join us to enhance your skills and connect with leaders in this evolving field.



Keynote Speaker

Dr. William Boissonnault

PT, DPT, DHSc, FAAOMPT, FAPTA

CEUs

14.5 hrs

Sponsored by APTA
Valid in most States
Please check your Practice Act

Unlock Your Expertise: APTA Federal Preconference Sessions at CSM 2026

The American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) Federal Section invites you to elevate your clinical practice with our dynamic preconference sessions at the Combined Sections Meeting (CSM) in Anaheim, California. CSM 2026 will bring together the best of physical therapy, and our specialized courses are designed to provide federal practitioners with advanced, hands-on training directly applicable to your practice setting.

A Federal Focus on Clinical Excellence

As a federal practitioner, your work is uniquely challenging and impactful. These preconference sessions, curated by the APTA Federal Section, are designed to meet your specific needs by focusing on the advanced skills required for excellence in your federal practice. Be sure to register by **November 5, 2025**, to receive the early bird rate. If you are local to CSM, you may also just register for a precon session. Visit the official CSM website to register and learn more. We look forward to seeing you in Anaheim!

*Early Bird Member
Precon Rate: \$315*

FD-24213: Advanced Clinical Reasoning in a Primary Care Physical Therapy Setting (0.8 CEUs)

Date: Tuesday, February 10, 2026

Primary Speaker: Ashley Rae Cassel, PT, DPT

Federal physical therapists are at the forefront of primary care, serving as first-contact providers. This course will refine your clinical reasoning skills for this vital role. Learn to recognize atypical symptoms, identify clinical red flags, and navigate triage pathways for patients with complex pain presentations. The course will also cover effective communication with physicians and other members of the interdisciplinary primary care team.

FD-24863: Advanced Lower Extremity Rehab and Performance Programming for the Modern Physical Therapist (0.9 CEUs)

Date: Wednesday, February 11, 2026

Primary Speaker: Mark Alan Riebel, PT, DPT, DSc

Go beyond basic rehab with this hands-on course focused on advanced strategies for the lower extremity. Participants will develop superior examination techniques for differential diagnosis and learn how to design progressive loading programs for maximum performance. This is an ideal course for federal clinicians working to keep service members, veterans, and other federal employees performing at their best.

FD-24789: From Image to Insight: Hands-on MSK Ultrasound for Physical Therapy Practice (0.9 CEUs)

Date: Wednesday, February 11, 2026

Primary Speaker: Jon A. Umlauf, PT, DPT, DSc

Musculoskeletal (MSK) ultrasound is an invaluable tool for enhancing a physical therapist's diagnostic capabilities. This hands-on course will provide you with the foundational skills to perform and interpret MSK ultrasound. This real-time imaging can provide critical insights into soft tissue structures and guide your treatment decisions with greater precision.

House of Delegates Approves Primary Care Specialty Certification: A Win for Federal Physical Therapy

In July 2025, our profession took a monumental step forward during the American Physical Therapy Association's (APTA) annual House of Delegates (HOD) meeting in Washington, D.C. With overwhelming support, the HOD passed a motion to approve Primary Care Physical Therapy as a new specialty certification. This historic decision officially recognizes primary care as a unique and advanced area of practice within physical therapy and marks a defining moment for the entire profession.

For APTA Federal, this achievement is particularly significant. Our section, through the tireless work of the Primary Care Special Interest Group (PC-SIG), has been instrumental in advocating for and developing the petition for this new certification. For years, our federal practitioners have operated at the forefront of primary care, embedding physical therapists in military readiness, veteran health, and other federal health initiatives. We have long championed the value of physical therapists as first-line providers, and this new board certification provides a formal, national framework to validate and standardize this expertise.

The approval for this certification is the culmination of a multi-year effort that included extensive research, expert collaboration, and a formal petition process submitted to the American Board of Physical Therapy Specialties (ABPTS). The work isn't over yet; the APTA is now moving forward with the next phase to develop the specialty exam and establish a residency pathway for primary care physical therapists.

What's Next?

Over the next five years, the focus will be on the development of the specialty board exam. This process will include recruiting subject matter experts from the federal and civilian sectors, defining the scope of the specialty, and crafting exam questions. This effort will formalize the knowledge and skills necessary for advanced primary care practice, ultimately enhancing patient care and solidifying the physical therapist's role as a vital member of the primary care team.

For our APTA Federal members, this means new pathways for professional growth and recognition. The specialty certification will provide a clear mark of distinction for those serving in primary care roles and will further validate our expertise to both federal leadership and the public. It is a powerful validation of the groundbreaking work that has defined federal physical therapy for decades.

Nominations for APTA Federal Awards

Researcher Award To recognize an individual for groundbreaking contributions in research for the field of Physical Therapy within the Federal Government.

Innovator Award To recognize an individual for groundbreaking contributions to the field of Physical Therapy within the Federal Government.

PTA Outstanding Service Award To honor an individual who has demonstrated outstanding achievements in the areas of patient care, community service, education, and commitment toward the profession and association.

The Researcher award must include a copy of the authored nominee's paper with complete reference citation. Each award requires 2 letters detailing how and why nominee meets the criteria. Individual may receive awards only once in a three (3) year period and only if the outstanding contributions are after the previous award. Contributions should be made within the federal sector physical therapy services. Please make sure nominee is aware of the nomination. [MORE INFORMATION AND TO NOMINATE](#)

TRICARE Disruptions Threaten Access to Physical Therapy for Military Families

Physical therapists (PTs) and physical therapist assistants (PTAs) are vital providers in the care of America's military families, supporting service members and their dependents through injury recovery, chronic condition management, and overall wellness. However, serious operational disruptions within the TRICARE system are now threatening access to this essential care.

Since January 1, 2025, providers in both the TRICARE East and West Regions have reported a range of issues—from delayed payments to outright nonpayment for medically necessary services. These disruptions have created significant financial and operational strain, jeopardizing the ability of PTs and PTAs to continue serving TRICARE beneficiaries.

The current challenges stem from a major administrative change that took place at the beginning of the year. TriWest Healthcare Alliance assumed responsibility for the TRICARE West Region, expanding its coverage to include six states previously part of the East Region. The transition has brought widespread payment and processing problems, leaving many providers in limbo.

"Timely payments and smooth operations within TRICARE are essential to ensure uninterrupted care for our military families," says APTA's Health Policy team. "The current issues must be resolved swiftly to protect the well-being of those who have served—and continue to serve—our country."

Make Your Voice Heard

If you are a provider experiencing TRICARE-related issues, the APTA encourages you to take action. Visit the APTA Legislative Action Center to share your experience and urge your member of Congress to press the Defense Health Agency (DHA) for immediate intervention.

Stay Informed

To help providers stay updated, APTA's Health Policy and Payment team will provide further insight during the upcoming:

PTA Regulatory, Legislative, and Payment Updates Webinar

October 9, 2025

Sign up at the [APTA Learning Center](#)

Don't miss this opportunity to understand the latest developments and what APTA is doing to address the issue on behalf of its members and the profession.

APTA Federal Session Introductions & Booth Volunteers

Save the Date for CSM 2026

Here's an early heads-up for all prospective APTA Federal booth volunteers!

- **What:** Volunteer to introduce education sessions and for the APTA Federal booth
- **Where:** Combined Sections Meeting (CSM) in Anaheim, California
- **When:** February 12–14, 2026
- **Next step:** Look for a sign-up link and more information in January 2026.

Thank you for your commitment to APTA Federal!



Dear APTA Federal Members,

We want to alert you to a current phishing scam targeting professional associations, including APTA Federal. Please be vigilant for any unsolicited emails, texts, or social media messages that appear to be from APTA Federal leadership and ask for money or personal information.

APTA Federal will never solicit funds from members. There will never be an urgent request for funds. If you receive an urgent request for payment or a wire transfer, do not respond. We will never request payment or wire transfer. Never share personal or financial information. APTA Federal will never ask you for your personal or financial information via email.

These scammers are using archived publicly available information to impersonate board members and refer to other board members. They may pressure you with urgency to send money via gift cards, wire transfers, or other unusual payment methods. To protect our members from this type of targeted attack, we have removed all leadership emails from the APTA Federal website.

How to protect yourself:

Do not reply to or click links in suspicious emails. If you receive an email that looks suspicious, requesting financial help or information, delete it immediately. Do not click on any links or open attachments, as they could contain malware.

Sincerely,
APTA Federal Board of Directors