

# SPRING 2025

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*Continued*



# APTA Federal<sup>SM</sup>

A Section of the American  
Physical Therapy Association

## The Success of APTA Federal Education Offerings: A Catalyst for Innovation in Physical Therapy

APTA Federal has consistently been at the forefront of advancing the field of physical therapy through innovative education offerings. Recently showcased at the Combined Sections Meeting, these programs have rapidly gained recognition for their impactful contributions to the professional development of physical therapists across the country.

The educational sessions held from February 13 to February 15 offered a diverse range of topics geared toward enhancing physical therapy practices and addressing current healthcare challenges.

On Thursday, the sessions included "Amputation Care Yearly Research Evidence Update," providing the latest insights in limb care, and "The Evolution of Clinical Blood Flow Restriction (BFR): From Theory to Science to Practice," which explored practical applications of BFR techniques. Participants also engaged with "Therapeutic Skepticism - Why Physical Therapists Believe Weird Things," which analyzed common misconceptions within the field. Other notable presentations covered pelvic stabilizers in gait applications, women's impact in driving change

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in physical therapy, considerations for retiring tactical athletes, and the embodiment of chronic pain in practice. The day concluded with discussions on translating emergency department research into practice and the influences of sleep, nutrition, and mindset on injury risk and rehabilitation.

Friday continued the trend with sessions like “Battlefield Mothers: Perinatal Care to Postpartum Recovery for the Tactical Athlete,” emphasizing the unique challenges faced by tactical athletes. “Human Performance in Extreme Environments” examined the implications of long-duration space travel, while “National Security Implications of Global Partnerships” highlighted the role of physical therapists in global health. Other topics included maximizing patient outcomes through clinical contextual factors, diabetic foot ulcer care guidelines, and innovative research in enhancing readiness for tactical athletes. The day also featured updates on phantom limb pain and effective utilization of electrophysical agents.

On Saturday, sessions focused on collaborative approaches to low back pain, equitable education for health professions trainees with disabilities, and management strategies for outdoor athletes. The day highlighted the importance of using outcome measures to reintegrate individuals with lower limb loss into higher-level activities.

Overall, the sessions provided a comprehensive learning experience through interactive discussions and the sharing of evidence-based practices, fostering a collaborative environment for professional growth.



## CSM APTA Federal Networking and Community Building

In addition to the educational content, the gatherings facilitated by the Federal Section served as vital networking opportunities. Attendees connected with fellow professionals, shared insights, and built relationships that extend beyond the conference. This sense of community is essential for fostering collaboration and support within the field, and it often leads to long-lasting professional connections that can enhance one's career trajectory. We look forward to seeing you at APTA CSM 2026.



## APTA FEDERAL 2025 Awards and Scholarships at CSM: A Commitment to Excellence in Physical Therapy

APTA Federal announced its prestigious awards and scholarship program for 2025, celebrating the remarkable achievements and contributions of physical therapy professionals and students across the nation. These awards aim to recognize those who exemplify excellence in practice, education, and research, while also fostering the next generation of physical therapists through scholarship opportunities.

### Researcher Award

Dr. Jennifer Stevens-Lapsley

### Innovator Award

LCDR Laura Riebel

### Post Professional

Joshua Kniss

### Early Career

Henry Haltiwanger

### Student

Zachary Romig and Kiley Robb



## Join Us Next Year!

Feb. 12-14, 2026  
Anaheim, CA



**APTA Federal**  
A Section of the American  
Physical Therapy Association



ATPA  
**Combined  
Sections  
Meeting**

## Looking Ahead: CSM 2026 Call for Proposals

As the APTA Federal Section continues to evolve its education offerings, the focus remains on innovation, relevance, and engagement. Future initiatives aim to incorporate innovative and interdisciplinary approaches to patient care. By staying ahead of the curve, APTA Federal is ensuring that physical therapists are well-prepared to meet the challenges of healthcare across the Federal sector. Call for 2026 Proposals ends April 15, 2025.

## CSM 2026 Update!

**Education sessions are 90 minutes & pre-conference courses are 8-hours.** As you prepare your proposal(s), ensure your content is designed to cover these specific timeframes and meets all requirements as per session proposal guidelines.

### Session Proposals

Submission Deadline: April 15, 2025

### Platform & Poster Abstracts

Submission Deadline: July 15, 2025

## CSM 2026 PROPOSAL SUBMISSION AND GUIDELINES

## APTA FEDERAL SIG UPDATES



### APTA Federal Primary Care SIG Achieves Approval to Apply for Board Specialty Status at HOD Meeting

The APTA (APTA) Federal Primary Care Special Interest Group (SIG) has reached a significant milestone by receiving approval for applying for board specialty status during the upcoming House of Delegates (HOD) meeting. This accomplishment marks a transformative moment for physical therapy practitioners and the field of primary care as a whole.

The approval of board specialty status for the Federal Primary Care SIG is a recognition of the growing role that physical therapists play in the primary care landscape. With an emphasis on holistic, patient-centered care, physical therapists are uniquely positioned to address a plethora of health concerns and contribute to comprehensive health management strategies.

The HOD, as the legislative body of the APTA, will convene to discuss and vote on several key issues affecting the profession. The inclusion of the Federal Primary Care SIG's proposal on the Board specialty and increasing importance of integrating physical therapy into primary care settings. The decision to grant board specialty status paves the way for establishing standardized certifications, further elevating the professional standing of physical therapists who specialize in primary care.

This achievement will hold profound implications for both practitioners and patients. For physical therapists, board specialty status enhances professional credibility and offers new opportunities for career advancement. It empowers therapists to pursue specialized knowledge and skills, ultimately leading to improved patient outcomes. For patients, having access to a specialized team of physical therapists can mean more comprehensive and coordinated care, addressing their needs more effectively.

Moreover, this milestone will reflect APTA's commitment to adapting to the evolving healthcare environment. As the demand for integrated and accessible healthcare solutions continues to rise, the role of physical therapy in primary care becomes increasingly vital. The Federal Primary Care SIG's achievement is a step forward in bridging gaps in healthcare delivery, promoting preventative care, and facilitating better health management practices.

The APTA Federal Primary Care SIG plans to harness this newfound status to further advocate for the role of physical therapy in primary care settings. With a dedicated focus on education, advocacy, and awareness, the SIG aims to ensure that primary care services continue to evolve and meet the needs of diverse patient populations.

In conclusion, the application for approval of board specialty status for the APTA Federal Primary Care SIG at the HOD meeting will be a landmark event that highlights the integral role of physical therapists in primary care. This development not only empowers professionals but also enriches the overall healthcare environment, promoting a more integrated and effective approach to patient care. As this specialty evolves, it will undoubtedly shape the future of physical therapy and its impact on the health and wellness of communities nationwide.

### Primary Care PT Summit & Think Tank

The 3rd Annual Primary Care PT Summit & Think Tank is scheduled for October 24-25, 2025 at Georgia Southern University in Savannah, GA. The Primary Care SIG is excited to build on the momentum from last year and is hoping to see you there. Please visit PC SIG website for more information.

**PRIMARY CARE SUMMIT  
& THINK TANK**

## APTA Federal Nominations: Opening April 15

As we gear up for the upcoming elections, we are asking members to nominate candidates. These elections offer a tremendous opportunity for us to shape the future of our profession and to advocate for federally employed physical therapists and physical therapy assistants.

APTA Federal's Nominating Committee will be working to find qualified nominees, but we also invite any member to nominate themselves or others for these positions. Elections will be posted, and nominations can be submitted starting on April 15, 2025. An eBlast will be sent out to all Federal Section members with election instructions.

The following positions will be available for election:

- President
- Secretary
- Communication Chair
- Service reps (Air Force, Army, DHA, Navy/Marines, USPHS, VA)

At the heart of our strength lies the collective voice of our members. APTA Federal strongly encourages active participation in the upcoming elections. If you, or anyone you know, is seeking an opportunity to grow, promote change, and support federal employees, this is the perfect opportunity! By actively participating in the electoral process and advocating for our profession, we can propel federal physical therapy forward and ensure that it remains a cornerstone of healthcare and continues to be the leader in advancing the physical therapy profession.

Remember, your participation counts, and together, we can make a difference.

Renee Schroeder, Secretary, APTA Federal Section

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## Research Survey - Federal Practice: MHS & Trigger Point Dry Needling

Take a few moments to help research.....

On behalf of the APTA Federal Practice Chair, if you are a MHS provider who performs dry needling or is interested in training to perform dry needling please complete a 5-10 minute survey. A study team at the Medical Center of Excellence and Uniformed Services University is conducting a research study to evaluate the use of Trigger Point Dry Needling (TDN) in the Military Health System (MHS). The survey is anonymous and voluntary and results may assist with the development of physical therapy practice with DHS policy on TDN. *IRB Protocol: MEDCoE # 24-00027e*

**TDN & MHS SURVEY**

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