



ACADEMY ROUNDUP

The Official Newsletter for the APTA Academy of Education

A source of news, announcements, and upcoming events for physical therapy educators.

Newsletter Highlights

- Announcements:
 - **A Big Welcome!** To Our All of Our New Officers and Volunteers!
 - Federal Affairs Liaison Update!
 - New! CE SIG Short Survey | We Want to Hear From You!
 - 20th Annual ELC 2025 | **Registration Open!**
 - FPTR Research Grant Applications Open
 - DEIJ Content Experts Needed
 - Education Impact Initiative Project
- Webinars
 - *Sustaining the Educator* | Wednesday | **July 8**
- SIG Spotlight
 - Clinical Education SIG
- Upcoming Events:
 - GAMER 2026 | **Registration Open!**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome and Thank You!

The Academy of Education proudly welcomes our new officers and volunteers who are stepping into leadership roles! Your dedication to advancing physical therapy education is truly inspiring, and we're excited to move forward together with fresh ideas and continued momentum.



At the same time, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to our outgoing officers and volunteers. Your contributions have shaped the Academy in meaningful ways, and your passion and leadership will be deeply missed. Thank you for your time, energy, and unwavering commitment.

Academy of Education

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As we transition into this next chapter, we're more motivated than ever to continue pushing our mission forward—together. Here's to building on our successes and creating a stronger, more innovative future for physical therapy education!



Federal Affairs Liason Update

Capitol Hill Day is taking place on July 15, where hundreds of APTA members will be in Washington DC to advocate on behalf of our patients and the profession. Here are the key issues APTA will be lobbying for this year:

Medicare Physician Fee Schedule (MPFS) Reform

Section 44304 of H.R. 1

The MPFS is the only system that does not have an annual inflationary update. Costs have gone up while cuts to payment have been implemented. All providers under the fee schedule, not just PTs, are affected. Inflation and the rising cost of clinic operations have exacerbated the issue. Congress must implement reforms to the fee schedule to increase stability to the MPFS.

Current status: The House passed Section 44304 of H.R. 1 (Big Beautiful Bill). Section 44304 establishes a permanent annual payment increase tied to a percentage of the Medicare Economic Index (MEI). It would begin in 2026 and is a \$9 billion initial investment. The Senate proposal excluded this provision.

Advocacy Ask:

- House: Thank members for including Section 44304 in H.R. 1. Encourage continued support.
- Senate: Urge them to include Section 44304 from the House bill in the Senate's version of the budget reconciliation package.
- Talking point summary: "The Medicare fee schedule is broken. Providers are facing cuts while costs rise. Congress must enact an annual inflationary update, beginning in 2026, tied to the MEI."

Locum Tenens Prevent Interruptions in Physical Therapy Act (H.R. 1517), Senate

Falls Prevention

SAFE Act (Stopping Addiction and Falls for the Elderly, H.R. 1171), no Senate companion yet

This bill expands access to falls screening and prevention services under Medicare. If a senior reports a fall during a Welcome to Medicare or Annual Wellness Visit, they may be referred to a licensed PT for a comprehensive falls risk assessment.

Rationale: 1 in 4 older adults report falls annually; those who fall once are at high risk of repeat incidents. Early intervention reduces costly injuries and complications.

Advocacy Ask:

- House: Urge members of the House to co-sponsor H.R. 1171. Thank current co-sponsors.
- Senate: Ask for a Senate companion bill and support once it is introduced

Optimizing Postpartum Outcomes Act (H.R. 4074), Senate companion in development

Purpose: Increase awareness and access to pelvic health physical therapy for pregnant and postpartum individuals. Addresses significant knowledge and access gaps among patients and providers.

Key Provisions:

Best Practices Guidance: HHS to issue guidance to Medicaid and CHIP agencies.

GAO Study: Examine coverage gaps in state Medicaid and CHIP programs.

CDC Educational Campaign: Provide resources for both patients and providers on pelvic health services.

Advocacy Ask:

companion bill coming soon

The bill would expand locum tenens privileges to all geographic areas (currently limited to rural/underserved areas). It would allow substitute physical therapists to bill Medicare under the regular PT's NPI for up to 60 days during temporary absences (e.g., illness, vacation, military service).

Advocacy Ask:

- House: Request co-sponsorship of H.R. 1517 or thank current co-sponsors.
- Senate: Upon bill introduction, request co-sponsorship.
- Committee Leadership: If the member cannot co-sponsor, ask them to help advance the bill through committee consideration (e.g., Energy & Commerce or Senate Finance Committees).

- House: Request co-sponsorship of H.R. 4074 or thank existing co-sponsors.
- Senate: Ask for support in introducing and advancing a Senate companion.

Medicare Opt-Out

Medicare Patient Choice Act

Going to be introduced in the House this week.



Other advocacy news:

There is not currently a student loan bill as there has been in previous years (Physical Therapist Workforce and Patient Access Act). Sponsors are needed for the bill to be reintroduced in this session Congress.

The current version of the Senate budget reconciliation package includes the same provision as the House version regarding student loans (government subsidies paid on loan interest eliminated in 2026, Grad PLUS loans eliminated for new borrowers in 2026). This is currently a point of contention in the Senate. APTA is working with dozens of other groups to work together and address this issue with Congress as a united front.

How You Can Help!

If you would like to stay up to date on advocacy and/or legislative alerts, consider joining the APTA Advocacy Network (formerly called the PTeam). You could also look into joining your state chapter's advocacy network. The APTA Advocacy Network sends out important information in real time. They do not bombard your email inbox with messages; they only send out information when necessary. It is a great way to stay up to date with legislative issues impacting our profession.

If you are looking to take action, there are many options .

- APTA members can log into the Legislative Action Center to send prewritten messages to their legislators. You can also edit the messages if you want to add a personal story.
- Nonmembers and members of the public can use the [Patient Action Center](#) to send prewritten messages to their legislators.
- There is also the [Regulatory Action Center](#), which you can use to access template letters for contacting the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services and other regulators.
- Members and nonmembers can send prewritten messages to their legislators with a few screen taps, view talking points on legislative issues, and find their legislators using the Advocacy App for [iPhone](#) or [Android](#).
- While the APTA works hard on our behalf, they are unable to address every issue and every bill. If there is a legislative issue that you feel strongly about, you can contact your Senator or Representative directly with your concerns.

[Find Your Congressional Representative](#)

[Find Your Senator](#)

Similarly, you can go to your state legislature website to find out who represents you at the state level.

Advocacy is a marathon, not a sprint. Taking action is important, and all types of action can make a difference (sending a letter, making a phone call, donating to the [PAC](#), etc). In these uncertain times it is more important than ever to make your voice heard.

New! Clinical Education SIG Survey

The Academy of Education Clinical Education Special Interest Group (SIG) is currently conducting a needs assessment to better understand the professional development opportunities and recognition needs of clinical faculty serving as Clinical Instructors for Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) and Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) students. Please take a moment to fill out the survey.

[Take the Survey](#)

ELC Registration is Now Open | Register Today!



ELC 2025
October 17-19 • Kansas City, MO

Co-hosted by



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FOUNDATION FOR
PHYSICAL THERAPY
RESEARCH

2025 Physical Therapy Research Grants

The Foundation for Physical Therapy Research grant portal is now open. Click below for information on the grants open this year.

[Learn More](#)

DEIJ Content Experts Needed

The Academy of Education is pleased to announce grant funding for content experts who are interested in creating one or more educational modules for AoE members that would help them develop additional skills in incorporating DEIJ-related concepts into their learning environments across academic, clinical, and program administration settings.

[Learn More](#)

[Apply](#)

NEW! Education Impact Initiative Project



EDUCATION IMPACT
INITIATIVE

Steven G. Lesh and Michele Valencia are collaborating on a project through the APTA Academy of Education's Education Impact Initiative to highlight innovative DPT/PTA collaborations and professionals with diverse disabilities excelling in education or clinical practice.

We're seeking interested participants in two key areas:

- 1) Unique and innovative DPT/PTA partnerships in education or clinical settings.
- 2) DPT/PTA professionals with diverse disabilities who've mastered educational or clinical environments.

Interested? Share your story by completing the form in the link below. Questions? Reach out—we'd love to connect!

For questions, please email:

[Michele Valencia, PT, DPT](#) or [Steven Lesh PhD, PT, AT Ret](#)

[Share Now!](#)



Sustaining the Educator: A Panel Discussion on

Faculty Burnout, Retention, and Work-Life Balance in Physical Therapy Education

Wednesday | July 8 | 4-5pm ET

Objectives:

- Identify key contributors to burnout among physical therapy faculty.
- Describe strategies to support faculty retention in academic physical therapy programs.
- Discuss methods for achieving and maintaining work-life balance in academic settings.
- Reflect on attendees' institutions and assess opportunities for organizational change.

Primary Speaker: [Jill Jumper, PT, DPT, PhD](#)

Secondary Speaker: [Christina Wisdom, PT, DPT, EdD](#)

Third Speaker: [Catherine \(Kate\) Andrea, PT, MPT, EdD](#)

Register

SIG SPOTLIGHT



APTA
Academy of Education.

Clinical Education
Special Interest Group

The Clinical Education SIG shall serve as a resource and forum for individuals who have professional concerns for the coordination, implementation, and evaluation of clinical education for physical therapists and physical therapist assistants. Both academic and clinical faculty are welcome!

CESIG Objectives:

- To provide a vehicle for increasing and improving communication among clinical educators.
- To increase the participation of clinical educators in the APTA Academy of Education.
- To provide continuing education in areas pertinent to clinical evaluation and teaching.
- To foster problem solving in clinical education using the scientific method.
- To promote cooperative efforts among educational programs and clinical sites in scheduling, evaluation, and continuing education.
- To develop guidelines for the continuing development and evaluation of academic and clinical faculty involved in clinical education.
- To serve as a resource body involved in acquiring, cataloguing, and disseminating information relating to clinical education in physical therapy.

For more information on the CESIG, please get in touch with:

UPCOMING EVENTS

Our Annual GAMER Workshop Registration is Now Open!

GAMER

Grantwriting and Mentorship in Education Research

January 22-24, 2026

(Travel days are January 21 and 25, 2026)

Charleston, South Carolina

We bring together a nationally recognized multidisciplinary group of mentors and consultants as faculty, including representatives from potential funding sources to support participants work. The workshop provides guidance in developing robust, clear and theoretically grounded research questions, grant proposals and career research agendas. The workshop will also facilitate inter-professional, and intra- and inter-institutional collaborative research networks and projects for education researchers in *Audiology, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy and Speech-Language Pathology*.

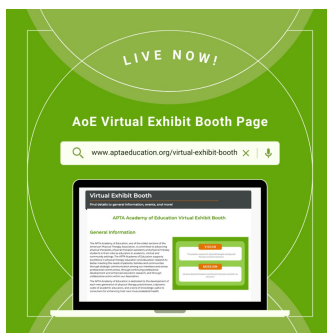
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Please contact [Rick Segal](#) if you have any questions.
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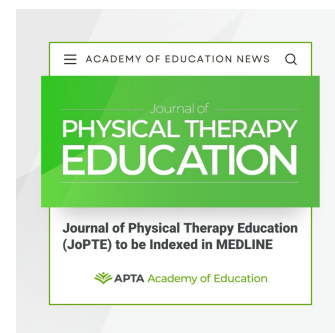
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