

President's Message Spring 2021

Camille Snyder, APTA Kansas President



Welcome to Spring everyone! I am excited for the sun to shine, to get a chance to be outside more regularly, and begin the process of having the COVID-19 pandemic in our rear-view mirror.

Thank you to all of you that were able to participate in our Webinars this Winter. On January 23rd, we sought to help PT Practices find ways to restore and recoup possible lost revenue due to the pandemic: Surviving COVID-19 from a Physical Therapy Practice Perspective: How To Best Evaluate Your Practice Losses In An Age Of Governmental Funding And Business Interruption Insurance. Speaker Matthew Katz and invited attorney and CPA addressed practice survivability, the Paycheck Protection Plan (PPP), the CARES Act Provider Relief Fund (PRF), and the business interruption insurance options and approaches. We invited the APTA Private Practice Section to advertise the webinar because the disruption on business affected many across the nation. On February 6th we held a webinar on Medical Payment Policy and Clinical Use of Telehealth Technologies for Physical Therapists to discuss emerging technologies for Telehealth and the Current environment for insurers to embrace the modality of Telehealth for Physical Therapy for the long run. Speaking about the long run, it looks that medical professionals are now more than ever are embracing Telehealth. Our next hurdle is insurance providers paying the same for in-person visits or Telehealth payment parity for the long term.

I provided neutral testimony on February 9th on behalf of APTA Kansas to the House Health and Human Service Committee which addressed HB2206 which included changes to some of the barriers to providing and patients receiving Telehealth. We were not included in the list of Healthcare providers. However, our lobbyists worked with the Kansas Occupation Therapy and Speech-Language Pathologist Associations to bring to the forefront that Telehealth has meaningful use for us to provide therapies effectively. The Kansas Hospital Association was also neutral as the reduced payment for Telehealth, prior to the pandemic, affects hospitals adversely (as it would us as well). Payment parity is still the primary hurdle and if you have a chance to have a voice with the payers you routinely contact, please educate them of the benefits of continued payment parity for Physical Therapy services which may be the best modality of service for certain people for whatever the reason: illness-related, weather-related or inability to access transport to an outpatient clinic.

A huge shout out of thanks goes to our Legislative Chair Jennifer Caswell, our Chief Delegate AJ Thomas, our Delegate Stacia Troshynski-Brown, and of course our hard-working lobbyists at 1861 Consulting for preparing us to testify on February 23rd in-person at the State House in support of a HB2279 regarding some language updates to our practice act that would allow for the FSBPTs PT Licensure Compact to be adopted. Thank you to Jennifer and our Lobbyists preparing conversations since the end of last year to be fruitful for this Spring. There is a corrected amendment and the Bill will be heard this week in the House... and upon the final draft of this newsletter, it had passed!

We are celebrating the APTA's Centennial Birthday from now until our Fall meeting in October when we hope to have a Centennial Celebration! Please participate in at least one way to [commemorate the last 100 years](#)

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free prizes will be sent to you just for participating. We should have our competition running soon for individuals and groups to compete for an Amazon gift card and \$100+ dollars respectively.

If you haven't seen the public service announcement from the APTA you can view it here on the [Choose PT site](#). The tag line is "Choose to Move" and is particularly apropos for post pandemic reset in activity requirements. 80% of the nation's adults are not getting the recommended daily activity. Movement reduces the risk of Diabetes, Heart Disease and Cancers while improving pain management and boosting the immune system. These points are also outlined in the 2021-2-22 Public Policy Priorities from the APTA specifically referring to the millions of cases of COVID-19 and spotlighting the challenges to our nation's health care system. Here is an excerpt of the message "[More Movement, Better Health, Choose PT](#)"

Here's what the data show:

Physical therapy is essential for many in their recovery from COVID-19. COVID-19 can strike anyone, and its effects range from being undetectable to requiring mechanical ventilation. When people are hospitalized and are just beginning to recover from the most severe effects of the novel coronavirus, physical therapists are helping. And physical therapy will continue to be needed by some long after they leave the hospital.

Physical therapy is effective in reducing pain. For example, a growing body of evidence for physical therapist treatment of low back pain includes a 2018 study published in Health Services Research that shows that using it as a first-line approach not only saves money but also dramatically reduces the chance of receiving a prescription for dangerous opioids.

Physical activity prevents disease. For example, people who regularly walk 8,000 steps a day are significantly less likely to die from cardiovascular disease, cancer, or any cause than those who take 4,000 steps or fewer, according to a March 2020 study published in JAMA.

Physical therapists treat people where they are. Physical therapists provide care to people across the lifespan and in many settings, including hospitals, private practices, outpatient clinics, homes, schools, sports teams and fitness facilities, the U.S. Armed Services, veterans' facilities, work settings, and nursing homes. About 90 commercial payers and Medicare have allowed physical therapist services to be delivered via telehealth during the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Please read on to see what the APTA is specifically asking Congress and the Administration to do. And hopefully we will still have an in-person advocacy day in September in Washington D.C. In closing, well there is no closing as we all continue to press forward for the progress of our profession, our patients, society and community. Here is to wishing all of you a peaceful Spring and thoughtfulness as to what we have gone through since last Spring.

Grateful to be your president!
Camille Snyder, PT, DPT