

Keep IN Touch

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A publication of the Arkansas Physical Therapy Association



MISSION

To represent and promote the profession of physical therapy in its endeavors to meet the physical therapy needs of society; to develop and improve the art and science of physical therapy including practice, education, and research; and to meet the needs and interests of its members.

ARPTA

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Vigilance

Ever-changing political landscape demands it



First and foremost, I would like to take this opportunity to wish all of you a healthy, happy and prosperous 2007. As is typical with the practice of physical therapy, there have been a number of challenges already this year.

The landscape seems to be ever-changing, and we must continue to be vigilant in our defense of our profession. It is

important that we continue to advocate for our patients at every opportunity, and my thanks go out to each and every one of you who has responded to the call.

As many of you know, we just concluded the legislative session, which was very interesting to say the least. During the latter half of 2006, we conducted several meetings of the chapter's Executive Committee and Board of Directors, which included our lobbyist, Bill Phillips.

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AGENDA

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

We developed a legislative agenda for the session and identified several key areas that would need to be addressed.

It had become evident right away that the bill we successfully passed in 2003 to prohibit one licensing board from disciplining the licensee of another board, such as occurred in the Michael Teston case, had some inherent flaws.

Specifically, the previous law contained a clause that actually encouraged the complaining board to file a suit in circuit court if they disagree with the decision of the licensee's board.

Therapy cap

As all of you know, the completely ridiculous and ill-conceived therapy cap was reinstated on January 1 of this year.

This issue has continued to be a thorn in our sides for almost 10 years, and we are continuing to expend our efforts to get the cap repealed. Unfortunately, the war in the Middle East has become a quagmire, and we are caught in the middle of a "lame duck" presidency.

2007 promises to be an intense and active year for physical therapy. The legislative environment will be filled with opportunities and challenges for rehabilitation.

Continued advocacy by APTA members will be needed to ensure that patients maintain access to physical therapists and that federal programs continue to recognize our role in advancing the health care of Americans.

If you have questions regarding APTA's efforts in Congress, please contact Justin Moore, PT, DPT, at justinmoore@apta.org or 703-706-3162.

While we were pleased that the Budget Reconciliation Act, passed in January, contained language to allow for exceptions to the therapy cap to be extended, full repeal is still our primary goal.

All four of Arkansas' U.S. congressmen and both of its U.S. senators are signed on as co-sponsors of the Medicare Access to Rehabilitation Services Act, which was introduced in the 110th Congress as HR 748 in the House of Representatives and S. 450 in the Senate.

This legislation would repeal the cap on outpatient rehabilitation services.

Progress

As a state, I believe Arkansas has accomplished some very important legislative and regulatory victories.

In February, legislation was unanimously passed restricting the licensee of one board from being disciplined by another licensing board in Arkansas.

No longer will a PT have to face the possibility of being called before another licensing board such as has happened in the past.

In addition, our association was instrumental in defeating a bill introduced by the chiropractors that would have made sweeping changes in the scope of practice for chiropractors and would have allowed chiropractors the right to call themselves physical therapists.

Also, we have had successful negotiations with the orthotists and prosthetists regarding a bill they introduced, and have protected the rights of physical therapists to provide O and P services to our patients.

The Medicare Patient Access to Physical Therapists Act, with Blanche Lincoln as the main



sponsor, was re-introduced in Congress earlier this year as HR 1333 in the House and S. 647 in the Senate.

This legislation would allow Medicare beneficiaries to access the services of physical therapists without a referral, if allowed by state law.

Loans

Currently, student loan debt is a significant burden to physical therapists and limits their practice opportunities, particularly in rural, underserved areas.

Last year, Rep. Jo Ann Emerson (R-Mo.) and Rep. Marion Berry (D-Ark.) introduced legislation (HR 5134) to add physical therapists to the National Health Service Corp. (NHSC) for purpose of qualifying for loan repayment programs.

Reimbursements

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) on January 18 of this year published a proposed rule in the *Federal Register* under which state Medicaid reimbursements to health-care providers operated by local governments could not exceed actual costs.

Under the rule, health-care providers, rather than state and local governments, would have to receive all Medicaid reimbursements to which they are entitled. The rule is intended to help eliminate financing agreements under which health-care providers receive state Medicaid reimbursements that exceed the actual cost of services and states receive extra matching funds from the federal government as a result.

The rule is expected to save the federal government an estimated \$3.9 billion over five years. CMS will issue a final rule after a 60-day public comment period.

The proposed rule is likely to have an adverse effect on the ability of many states to fund their Medicaid programs, potentially making it harder for people to get needed health-care services such as physical therapy.

APTA is analyzing the rule and will be submitting comments to CMS on the detrimental effects that this rule could have on Medicaid reimbursement for physical therapy services.

While we recognize the need to curb fraud and abuse in this area of the Medicaid program, we want to avoid the unintended consequence of withdrawing coverage for “optional services” such as physical therapy.

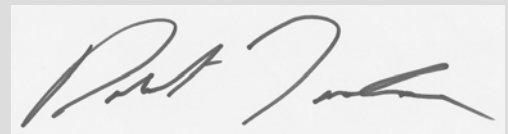
This proposed change in policy is likely to be very controversial, drawing opposition from states, members of Congress, and various patient and professional organizations. APTA will monitor their activities and identify any advocacy opportunities.

Join

I believe these successes would not have been possible without the concerted efforts of PTs and PTAs working at the grass roots level.

ArPTA will continue to fight for PTs in all practice settings. If you and your professional staff members are already members of ArPTA, I would like to congratulate you and thank you for your dedication to your profession.

If you or any members of your professional staff are not members, I would like to invite you to join us. We can no longer afford to sit idly by on the sidelines assuming someone else will fight our battles for us.



Robert Jordan, ArPTA President



MEMBER PROFILE

BETH CRAVENS

Long-practicing PT has seen changes



Beth Cravens began her career as a physical therapist in January 1960. That makes her one of the longest-practicing physical therapists in the state.

A Little Rock native and graduate of Little Rock Central High School, Cravens attended the physical-therapy program at Baylor University because Arkansas did not have a program for physical therapy at the time. She graduated with a BS in physical therapy in December 1959. Cravens began practicing at Baptist Medical Center the following January after returning home. At the time, a physical therapist's main practice setting was in the acute care setting.

By 1962, Cravens helped start a new physical-therapy department for the hospital in North Little Rock.

"When it was designed, there was no PT department planned," she said. "We were forced to practice in patient rooms, and would come in to find our equipment in a closet because the rooms were needed for patients. We then began using the empty floors that had yet to be completed and would move the department up to a new floor as the hospital grew."

Cravens took a few years off to have children, but came back to PT when she was asked to help provide therapy services for patients at Riley's Oak Hill Manor nursing home in Little Rock. Because she could have flexibility in her hours, Cravens began an endeavor that would lead to the formation of a private practice in 1968.

The practice has been located in North Little Rock since that time. Cravens began diversifying her practice early. She taught childbirth classes and Lamaze, but noted at the time fathers were not allowed in the delivery room. Her work would be instrumental in changing this practice. Cravens was able to gain access for fathers in one facility, which led to other facilities following suit.

Soon, she was leading aerobic dance classes for pregnancy, and baby massage classes followed. Cravens was a pioneer in women's health.

"I just responded to meet the needs of the patients at the time," she said.

Today, Cravens continues to practice, and is proud to practice with her daughter, Dede, and colleague, Denise, who has practiced with her for 17 years. Dede is following in her mom's footsteps with a unique specialty practice. She has an advanced master's degree in physiotherapy for animals from Australia. She is one of the few therapists in the United States with this degree, and treats a variety of animals. This area of practice is not recognized by the Arkansas Board of Physical Therapy or any other board in Arkansas at this time, but Cravens said her daughter doesn't let it deter her.

Cravens believes APTA is vital for the profession.

"The profession has faced many trials over the years, but physician-owned physical-therapy services [POPTS] is a 'killer' to private practices," she said. "APTA provides therapists an avenue to solve problems and learn from one another."

Cravens said that despite any future problems, the physical-therapist profession will prevail because of the quality of services it provides.

"APTA sets a standard of excellence for our profession," she said.

SCHOOL REPORTS

ARKANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY, JONESBORO

PT students, faculty hold screenings for schools



The physical therapy program at Arkansas State University continues to be a dynamic place to learn with 25 students in its 2007 class. Since last fall, physical therapy students and faculty members have performed scoliosis screenings for local schools as part of a service-learning project.

As part of the Musculoskeletal course work, the students — under supervision of the faculty — are providing free physical therapy services for the Arkansas State University community at-large. In February, five students attended CSM in Boston.

In addition, the annual Physical Therapy Student Association Fit for Life 5K race is set for this spring. Members of the class participated in the United Way Day of Caring last fall, at which they spent the day painting and cleaning up residences for special-needs clients.

Also, class members spent a day and a half at Timber Ridge Ranch in Benton, a long-term facility for survivors of traumatic brain injuries. The students worked with patients and their family members.

NORTHWEST ARKANSAS COMMUNITY COLLEGE, BENTONVILLE

Grads earn first-time pass rate of 100 percent



NWACC
Learning For Living

Recent graduates of the NWACC PTA Program had a 100 percent first-time pass rate on the state licensure examination again this year, and all graduates are employed as PTAs.

NWACC is currently accepting applications for the technical phase of the PTA Program to begin on June 11. Two continuing-education opportunities through NWACC are available to PTs and PTAs. “The Role of the PTA” is a free self-study course that has been approved by the Arkansas State Board of Physical Therapy for 0.3 CEUs.

Each spring, NWACC co-sponsors a continuing-education course with the Northwest District of ArPTA. NWACC will offer “Ergonomic Assessment & Intervention for Work and Home” on March 3. Proceeds from the course are utilized for PTA student scholarships.

PTA students at NWACC are now eligible for the William Nelson Physical Therapist Assistant Scholarship. The scholarship is designed to help a deserving student further his or her education as a physical therapist assistant.

Recipients must be accepted in the technical phase of the PTA Program at NWACC. This full tuition scholarship is intended to cover tuition, fees and books with additional amounts being refundable to the student. NWACC awarded one scholarship this year. The number of scholarships will vary from year to year.

For more information about the PTA Program at NWACC, please contact Deanna Fletcher at dfletche@nwacc.edu or 479-619-4253.

MEMBER NEWS

Save the date for CE opportunity

ArPTA will host a continuing education opportunity in Little Rock on September 29.

Guest speaker will be Staffan Elgelid, PT, Ph.D, CFT, LMT, and the topic will be "Gait From a Feldenkrais perspective: From world class athletes to patients with neurological impairment, it is about improving performance!" The location has yet to be determined.

For more information, contact ArPTA member services director Joie Ketcham at 501-687-1395 or joie@brentstevensonassociates.com."

Role of PTAs is subject of free self-study course

The free self-study course "The Role of the Physical Therapist Assistant" currently is being offered through the NorthWest Arkansas Community College Physical Therapist Assistant Program. The Arkansas Physical Therapy Board has granted 0.3 CEUs for successful completion.

The course was developed to provide physical therapists and clinical instructors with information to help determine how to best utilize the PTA as part of the physical-therapy team. Clinicians will be sent a CD with course materials including the power point presentation and written examination. A copy of the examination must be returned for grading. Upon successful completion of the examination (a score of 70 percent on the exam), CEU credits will be awarded. It will take the student three to four hours to study and complete the exam.

For more information, contact Deanna Fletcher, director of the NWACC PTA Program, at 479-619-4253 or dfletche@nwacc.edu.

New content outlines set for national PT exam

The Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy (FSBPT) has updated content outlines for the 2008 PT and PTA National Physical Therapy Examination (NPTE). The new content outlines will be used to develop exams taken by all candidates beginning March 1, 2008.

The content outlines can be accessed in their entirety by visiting www.fsbpt.org and clicking on exam information/NPTE/content outlines.

APTA Emerging Leader Award nominations due May 15

One "emerging leader" from each chapter and section will be recognized annually in the October issue of PT Magazine. Nominations for 2007 are due by May 15. The chapter and section president or their respective awards committee chair is responsible for submitting the name of the nominee and supporting information to APTA's Component Services Department.

Please e-mail any questions to Lisa McLaughlin at lisamclaughlin@apta.org.

Congress renews push for Medicare direct access

Legislation to improve access to physical therapists for Medicare beneficiaries was reintroduced in the U.S. Senate recently, following the filing of identical legislation last week in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Sen. Blanche Lincoln (D-Ark.) joined six of her colleagues in introducing the Medicare Patient Access to Physical Therapists Act (HR 1552/S 932) to provide beneficiaries with the same direct access to physical therapist evaluation and treatment that 43 states (and now the District of Columbia) provide for non-Medicare patients.

APTA urges all members to contact their senators and representatives and ask them to co-sponsor the Medicare Patient Access to Physical Therapists Act. More information is available at www.apta.org.

Leadership meetings set for D.C. in May: *Denver out*

Please note there will be no leadership meetings planned for PT 2007 in Denver in June. The Reception for Component Leaders, the Component Leadership Meeting, the Management & Operations Meeting, and the Section Presidents Meeting will all take place May 19, 20, 21, and 22, respectively, in conjunction with the HoD and Advocacy Academy at the Omni Shoreham in Washington, D.C.

Please contact Lisa McLaughlin with questions or for more information at lisamclaughlin@apta.org or at ext 3230.

Volunteers needed for consultant group

APTA is seeking volunteers to provide feedback and resources related to APTA's Education Strategic Plan Goal #2: Develop systems to promote and measure continued competence. If you have experience or interest in an aspect of continued competence and are willing to volunteer your time to potentially serve in a consultant pool of stakeholders on continued competence, please contact Marilyn Phillips at marilynphillips@apta.org.

Graphic-standard manual, logos now available online

Each component can now download APTA's Graphic Standard Manual from the APTA web site. The manual includes guidelines on use of the APTA logo, development of component stationary, component newsletters, and much more.

Please note, the manual and logos are member password protected. Official component names vary greatly. If a correction needs to be made to your component name, please contact APTA's Art Department at art@apta.org.

Foundation accepting grant applications

The Foundation for Physical Therapy is now accepting online applications for \$40,000 physical therapy research grants to be funded in 2008. The Foundation currently has four grants available for 2008: the Pittsburgh-Marquette Challenge Grant, the Legacy Endowment Grant, the Pediatric Research Grant, and the Magistro Family Foundation Research Grant. Applications are due August 14, 2008; award notifications will be made in December 2007.

For specific information, please visit the Foundation's Web site at www.foundationforphysicaltherapy.org.

"Current Research in PT" page has moved

The "Current Research in PT" page on the APTA website has been moved into Open Door (www.apta.org/opendoor) to take advantage of links to full-text articles in ProQuest.

Any questions can be directed to Gini Blodgett Birchett at giniblodgett@apta.org.

Membership growing

APTA membership continues to grow. At the end of March, APTA membership stood at 69,257— an increase of 5.21 percent (3,431 members) when compared to March 2006. APTA recognized increases among physical therapists, physical therapist assistants, and students. PT membership increased by 4.06 percent (2,000 members). Within the PT category, PT Fulls increased by 3.95 percent (1,721 members). In addition, PTA membership increased by 1.47 percent (68 members) and student membership increased by 11.44 percent (1,363 members) for the same time period.

For more information, please contact Kathy Partain at kathypartain@apta.org.

2008 ARPTA OFFICER NOMINEES

PRESIDENT

2-year term

Robert Jordan, Hot Springs

TREASURER

2-year term

Stan Harris, Little Rock

Beth McKittrick-Bandy, Little Rock

DELEGATE

2-year term

Staffan Elgelid, Jonesboro

Jennie Gregory, Little Rock

Mala Waller, Maumelle

DELEGATE

1-year term

Twala Maresh, Cabot

Myles Quiben, Conway

Susan Roehrig, Jonesboro

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

3-year term

Misty Booth, Little Rock

Lara LaMastus, Fayetteville

Blake McBride, Mountain Home

PTA CAUCUS REP

1-year term

Cheryl Jordan - Hot Springs

Additional information about each nominee will be placed on the ArPTA website by June 1. Elections will be held by mail this summer. For more information, contact Nominating-Committee chair James Fletcher at fletcher@uca.edu.

Central District fall meeting dates scheduled

ArPTA Central District meetings have been scheduled for the fall of 2007.

“Evidence-Based and Cutting-Edge Interventions for Low Back Pain” will be the subject of a Central District meeting on Sept. 11 at the St. Vincent Health Education Center, North Auditorium. The program will be presented by Steve Forbush, PT, MS.

Tracey Jarvis, PT, will present “Monochromatic Infrared Energy (MIRE): Basic Principles and Use in Physical Therapy” on Nov. 6 at the Baptist Health Rehabilitation Institute’s Inservice Education Room on the first floor.

For more information, contact Inna Swann at 501-908-5216 or iswann@yahoo.com.

E-mail her if you want to receive information on upcoming events.

All meetings begin at 6:30 p.m. and are free to PTs, PTA clinicians and PT students. Each presentation is worth one (1) CE hour.

Advertise in this newsletter

\$100 for classified ad
\$175 for business-card ad
\$375 for quarter-page
\$550 for half-page
\$750 for full-page

Call 501-687-1395

Arkansas Physical Therapy Association Business Meeting

Saturday, April 21, 2007

6:30 PM

Whole Hog Café

2516 Cantrell Rd

Little Rock, AR 72202

\$10 Dinner - OPTIONAL

CASH BAR

Awards to be presented

Please RSVP for Dinner

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