POSİTİON

The American Physical Therapy Association supports the Promoting Physical Activity for Americans Act (H.R. 2891/S. 1608), bipartisan legislation that would require the Department of Health and Human Services to provide evidence-based physical activity recommendations for the general public. S. 1608 was introduced by Sens. Roger Wicker, R-Miss., Sherrod Brown, D-Ohio, Kyrsten Sinema, D-Ariz., and Shelley Moore Capito, R-WVa.; the bill passed the Senate on December 19, 2019. H.R. 2891 was introduced by Reps. Ron Kind, D-Wis., and David McKinley, R-WVa.

BACKGROUND

According to the Department of Health and Human Services, 39% of adults and 18% of youth in the United States are considered obese. Obesity can lead to an increased likelihood of developing life-threatening diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, and certain forms of cancer. One of the contributors to obesity is physical inactivity. Less than 5% of adults participate in 30 minutes of physical activity each day and more than 80% of adolescents do not meet the guidelines of aerobic physical activity for youth. The Centers for Disease and Control Prevention (2017) indicates that poor diet and physical inactivity cause over 400,000 deaths each year.

PROMOTING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND EXERCISE

H.R. 2891/S. 1608 would require the Secretary of HHS to publish a report every 10 years providing physical activity recommendations for the people of the United States. The report would be based on the most current evidence-based scientific and medical knowledge and would include additional recommendations for population subgroups, such as children or individuals with disabilities, including information regarding engagement in appropriate physical activity and avoiding inactivity. The physical activity information and recommendations in the report would be considered by relevant federal agencies in carrying out relevant federal health programs. This report also would help to educate and guide the patients and clients served by physical therapists and physical therapist assistants.

THE ROLE OF PHYSICAL THERAPISTS AND PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANTS IN HEALTH PROMOTION

Physical therapists and physical therapist assistants play a unique role in society in prevention, wellness, fitness, health promotion, and management of disease and disability by serving as a dynamic bridge between health and the delivery of health care services for individuals across the life span. Physical therapists are experts in rehabilitation and habilitation and in promoting lifestyle changes that can improve overall health and prevent the need for avoidable health care services. Physical therapists integrate scientific principles of movement, function, and exercise progression to promote physical activity and improve health outcomes for individuals and populations. Additionally, physical therapists design and develop integrated clinical and community screening programs to prevent and manage disease and disability, referring individuals to other services, when appropriate, as part of a community-based integrated team focused on healthy lifestyle behaviors.

“80% of US adults and adolescents are insufficiently active. As a result, many Americans currently have or are likely to experience chronic diseases, including heart disease, diabetes, obesity, and depression.”

source: https://health.gov/sites/default/files/2019-09/Physical_Activity_Guidelines...


For more information on APTA priorities, visit APTA’s policy center at http://policy.apta.org.
FACTS ABOUT PHYSICAL THERAPISTS AND PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANTS

WHO WE ARE
Physical therapists (PTs) are health care professionals who diagnose and treat individuals of all ages, from newborns to the very old, who have medical problems or other health related conditions that limit their ability to move and perform functional activities in their daily lives. PTs also work with individuals to prevent the loss of mobility before it occurs by developing fitness- and wellness-oriented programs for healthier and more active lifestyles.

Physical therapist assistants (PTAs) provide selective physical therapist interventions under the direction and supervision of physical therapists.

WHAT WE DO
PTs examine each individual and develop a plan of care using treatment techniques to promote the ability to move, reduce pain, restore function, and prevent disability. Under the direction and supervision of the PT, PTAs provide selective physical therapist interventions based on the developed plan of care.

WHERE WE PRACTICE
PTs and PTAs provide care for people in a variety of settings, including outpatient clinics or offices; inpatient rehabilitation facilities; skilled nursing, extended care, or subacute facilities; education or research centers; schools; hospices; industrial, workplace, or other occupational environments; and fitness centers and sports training facilities.

EDUCATION AND LICENSURE
All PTs must receive a degree from an accredited physical therapist program before taking and passing a national licensure exam that permits them to practice. Since 2015, all accredited programs award the doctor of physical therapy degree. State licensure is required in each state in which a PT practices. PTAs must complete a two-year associate’s degree and are licensed, certified, or registered in most states.

AMERICAN PHYSICAL THERAPY ASSOCIATION
The American Physical Therapy Association is a national organization representing more than 100,000 physical therapists, physical therapist assistants, and students nationwide. Its goal is to foster advancements in physical therapist education, practice, and research.

CONTACT INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

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Cosponsor H.R. 2891/S. 1608 Today!
For additional information, contact the American Physical Therapy Association’s Government Affairs Department at 703/706-8533 or advocacy@apta.org.