2016 YEAR IN REVIEW
Back when APTA adopted the vision, some wondered if it was too lofty. Can the physical therapy profession really transform society?

We can. The #ChoosePT campaign alone is evidence of that: America is in the clutches of an opioid epidemic, and our profession has been identified as part of the solution.

Our potential for impact transcends individual lives and families. By reducing opioid use and abuse, we can affect communities. By getting people committed to movement instead of quick fixes, we can create a healthier nation. By advocating for approaches that are patient-centered and rooted in evidence, we can transform health care.

Our big dreams can’t be accomplished without teamwork. Again in 2016, the physical therapy community has demonstrated that we recognize this fact, and we approached our collaborative efforts with creativity, energy, and compassion. Our members make me proud to be a physical therapist, and I am deeply honored to serve as your president.

We are better together.

APTA President Sharon L. Dunn, PT, PhD
Board-Certified Orthopaedic Clinical Specialist
2016 YEAR IN REVIEW

ADDRESSING AN EPIDEMIC

We came together to educate the public about safe alternatives to opioids through the #ChoosePT campaign. This year we reached millions with TV and radio public service announcements, paid advertising, and earned and social media, leading to record traffic at MoveForwardPT.com.

MORE HIGHLIGHTS

APTA was the only health care association representing nonprescribers that was invited to participate in the White House’s opioid working group. The White House cited the reach of MoveForwardPT.com in extending the invitation.

Support by APTA chapters and sections extended the campaign’s reach, including billboards, newspaper ads, and community engagement.

Campaign ad placements included Times Square, commemorative programs for the World Series, WebMD, and multiple national news websites.

IN THE WORKS

APTA’s ongoing efforts to fight the opioid epidemic will include a resource that targets legislators, plus a webinar for PTs on pain management.
ENHANCING MEMBERSHIP

Along with new clinical summaries, tests, and clinical practice guidelines, we expanded the resources at PTNow with the Rehabilitation Reference Center, connecting PTs and PTAs with information on diseases and conditions, drug information, patient education materials, exercise images, and practice resources.

MORE HIGHLIGHTS

APTA expanded relationships with businesses that offer special discounts to members, including:

- Up to 34% savings on UPS shipping services
- As much as 20% off all hotels in the Wyndham family, including Days Inn, Ramada, Travelodge, and more
- 15% off the Cypher clinical documentation tool, a resource that quickly and easily finds the most accurate ICD-10 codes

IN THE WORKS

APTA is exploring student loan consolidation opportunities as well as financial literacy resources to help student members.
INCREASING PATIENT ACCESS

We collaborated to launch the physical therapy licensure compact, a system that will enable PTs and PTAs to practice in multiple states through a single license and privilege. With efforts from state chapters, so far 4 of the minimum 10 states have signed on, and related legislation will be introduced in at least 15 states in 2017.

MORE ADVOCACY WINS

Locum tenens provisions were extended to many PTs.

Support for rehabilitation research at NIH was strengthened.

PTs are now included in the Sports Medicine Clarity Act bill, legislation that would extend liability coverage for PTs traveling out of state.

Direct access expanded in Louisiana and Florida, the role of PTs in concussion management expanded in New Mexico and Hawaii, dry needling was added to the PT practice act in Kansas, and Wisconsin became the first state to specifically list the ability to order X-rays as part of PT scope of practice.

IN THE WORKS

APTA’s public policy priorities will include efforts to eliminate the Medicare therapy cap.
MAKING CONNECTIONS

We earned seats at the table to shape policy discussion, and we leveraged member expertise. From our congressional briefing on rehabilitation research to our participation in the White House’s opioid working group, we’re taking engagement to the next level.

MORE CONNECTIONS

APTA established 2 new collaborative member councils, 1 on health systems, and 1 on rehabilitation science and technology.

APTA participated on the advisory committee of 1 of the country’s largest utilization management companies.

8 PT members were nominated to quality-related expert panels and work groups, including the Physician Consortium for Performance Improvement and the National Quality Forum Measure Application Partnership.

IN THE WORKS

APTA’s Learning Center partnered with sections to provide courses in aquatics, pediatrics, geriatrics, oncology, home health, and cardiovascular and pulmonary physical therapy.
SHARING KNOWLEDGE

We tapped into the profession’s collective wisdom by hosting a Movement System Summit to explore the profession’s identity. We also facilitated crucial surveys to define public policy priorities and address potentially misvalued CPT codes.

MORE KNOWLEDGE SHARING

The Combined Sections Meeting (CSM) in Anaheim, California, was the largest in APTA history, with more than 11,000 attendees.

The NEXT Conference & Exposition featured timely lectures about “unprecedented opportunities” and the pain management “roadmap to revolution.”

APTA conducted national consumer research and held focus groups on health disparities, cultural competence, and student communication.

ALSO IN 2016

PTA members gained the right for a full vote at the component level in 32 chapters and sections.
TRANSFORMING PRACTICE

We introduced members to the conceptual tools that will help them take advantage of emerging models of health care through our Innovation 2.0 Learning Labs on postacute care, value-based care for low back pain, and the role of PTs as integral members of ACOs.

MORE TRANSFORMATION

APTA continued to develop clinical practice guidelines (CPGs) in collaboration with sections, adding new CPGs to PTNow on management of individuals with venous thromboembolism and on vestibular rehabilitation for peripheral vestibular hypofunction.

17 CPGs funded by APTA now are in development, and 3 more were approved.

Meanwhile, 25 members from 8 sections attended a workshop on CPG development.

IN THE WORKS

The fourth Innovation 2.0 Learning Lab, focused on childhood obesity, will be offered this spring.
We created the Education Leadership Partnership Steering Committee, a collaborative decision-making group representing APTA, ACAPT, and the Education Section to promote excellence in PT and PTA education.

The Education Leadership Institute (ELI) program continued to grow, producing its largest class and highest number of applicants. Accredited residency and fellowship education programs increased by 7%. Performing Arts was recognized as a new area of fellowship practice by the American Board of Physical Therapy Residency and Fellowship Education.

The APTA Learning Center launched more than 35 new courses—8 of them free for APTA members.
TRANSFORMING PAYMENT

We launched extensive education efforts to help members stay on top of changes to payment, including resources to understand and use the new CPT evaluation and reevaluation codes that will have a profound impact on the future of payment.

NEW PHYSICAL THERAPY EVALUATION CODES

Three new codes—97161, 97162, and 97163—replace the single 97001 CPT code for physical therapy evaluation, beginning January 1, 2017.

How to use this guide:
Physical therapy evaluations require the following components in selecting the correct evaluation level—History, Examination, Clinical Presentation, and Clinical Decision Making. Additional guiding factors include coordination, consultation, and collaboration of care consistent with the nature of the problem and the needs of the patient. The table inside summarizes the requirements for reporting physical therapy evaluation services.

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PHYSICAL THERAPY EVALUATION REFERENCE TABLE

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IN THE WORKS

A new online toolkit is being developed to help members and chapters navigate utilization management challenges.

MORE TRANSFORMATION

APTA helped members understand and advocate on the private insurance front, with articles on appropriate documentation, the best way to submit appeals, and how (and when) to take a matter to a state’s insurance commissioner.

APTA successfully argued for Medicare plans to delay medical review measures with new CPT coding.

APTA received a federal commitment that physical therapy copays would not rise above primary care copays.
APTA isn’t just a collection of resources. It’s a place of engagement, a place that offers opportunities for professional growth, and a place that enables our collective voice to be heard.

It’s an opportunity to better serve our patients and clients by fulfilling our individual potential, and the potential of our profession.

Thank you for a wonderful year.

Justin Moore, PT, DPT
APTA CEO
In 2016, APTA’s primary policymaking body worked to apply the principles of APTA’s transformative vision to real-world issues, including the promotion of healthy community design, the creation of better public education around PT specialist certifications, and the unanimous formal endorsement of federal-level efforts to battle the opioid abuse epidemic and promote physical therapy as a safe nondrug alternative for pain treatment.

The House also continued to flesh out the future of the profession itself with successful motions that re-envision how PTs and PTAs present themselves to the public, establish a new specialist certification in oncologic physical therapy, and direct APTA to look at ways to address PT and PTA student debt.

The society-facing House decisions set the stage for ramped-up efforts toward awareness of PT specialist certifications among the public, other providers, and even other PTs. The idea behind the directive: a broader understanding of the profession’s specializations will lead to more targeted and cost-effective care.

The House also underscored the importance of advocating for an activity that all PTs should be legally empowered to perform: ordering imaging studies. Delegates passed a provision that directs the association to “develop and promote a plan to achieve practice authority for ordering and performing imaging studies across practice settings.”

Other motions passed by the House include:

- An initiative to preserve the histories of the physical therapy profession and the association in preparation for the 100th anniversary of APTA
- A call for the association to encourage external publications to “accurately reflect the available evidence rather than represent physical therapist practice or physical therapy research as a single or limited set of interventions”

COMPONENT RECOGNITION

This year’s 7 most outstanding and innovative APTA chapters and sections were recognized on June 5 during the Component Leadership Meeting in Nashville.

Outstanding Component Awards

The American Council for Academic Physical Therapy (ACAPT) was named Outstanding Component for several achievements, including a diversity report defining underrepresented minorities in physical therapy education; the establishment of the Consortium on Humanities, Ethics, and Professionalism; and initiatives for integrated clinical education, student readiness, and the development of common terminology for physical therapy education.

The Georgia Chapter was named Outstanding Chapter for its successful advocacy efforts, including a series of video messages, that led to the passage of legislation updating the state practice act for the first time in more than 20 years.

The Kansas Chapter was named Outstanding Chapter for a new public relations campaign that increased public understanding of how direct access could make a difference in their lives, for hosting 9 Town Hall meetings throughout the state, and for helping to ensure the passage of dry needling legislation.

The Orthopaedic Section was named Outstanding Section for its mentoring program that focused on students and new professionals, achievements in the performance arts practice setting, completion of a new imaging manual, publication of 10 clinical practice guidelines (with another 12 in development), creation of the National Orthopaedic Physical Therapy Outcomes Database, and use of a volunteer involvement form to increase member engagement.

Innovative Component Awards

The Massachusetts Chapter was named Innovative Chapter for a robust onboarding campaign for new members, including capitalizing on the strength of its special interest groups, adding “Movement Matters” exhibits to its PT Day on Beacon Hill event, and hosting a forward-thinking Salon during its membership conference.

The Alabama Chapter was recognized for Innovative Effort for its celebration of the 40th anniversary of PTA licensure in the state.

The Tennessee Chapter was acknowledged for Innovative Effort for organizing leadership development workshops to educate and inspire its members—with a focus on new professionals—about state grassroots advocacy and the legislative process.
New CPT Codes
So long, 97001 and 97002! Hello, 97161, 97162, 97163, and 97164. This year PTs will sharpen their expertise using a new tiered evaluation coding system. Payment won’t be affected this year, but the results could inform future code values.

MIPS Benchmarking
PTs are at least 2 years away from being required to report quality measures through MIPS, but voluntary reporting in 2017 will give benchmarking data to participating PTs while benefitting APTA’s advocacy efforts.

Continued #ChoosePT
APTA’s public service announcements will continue to air on TV and radio stations across the country as the opioid awareness campaign continues.

Student Loan Support
APTA is working on new loan consolidation opportunities and financial literacy resources for students.

Enhanced PTJ Online
In a partnership with Oxford University Press, PTJ’s web presence will be enhanced as the journal moves toward being online-only in 2019.

Diversity Milestone
APTA will host the 25th annual Celebration of Diversity, which helps the Minority Scholarship Fund reward hundreds of deserving students and faculty for their academic excellence, superior achievement, professionalism, and outstanding participation in minority affairs activities and services.

Registry Revolution
Informed by pilot testing, APTA’s Physical Therapy Outcomes Registry will have its public launch in 2017, allowing essential data collection and electronic health record integration as health care continues to evolve from volume-based to value-based care.