

2023 Candidate Statement – Candidate for Director



Victoria S. T. Tilley, PT Board-Certified Geriatric Clinical Specialist

Question: What meaningful qualities do you bring to the Board of Directors that would help to achieve the APTA strategic plan?

Response:

When elected to my first term in 2020 the COVID-19 pandemic was beginning and as families, communities, businesses, and citizens we coped with a lockdown. APTA and its components responded with resources in an amazingly quick fashion. We faced challenges, made transitions to support our families and work lives. We are still coming to terms that we are in for a marathon, not a sprint.

Our new strategic plan was finalized during that time. As we were beginning to understand the ramifications of the pandemic APTA, its members, and the Board of Directors (BoD) were creating a strategic pathway into a different future for APTA. My career path has developed the leadership qualities that make me an excellent candidate for the BoD as we strategically advance the profession.

Foremost, I am a clinician. My practice background is diverse, while centered on serving the older adult population. I have been a Geriatric Clinical Specialist since 1997. I started my private practice in 2002 because I was weary of being told by an employer to make decisions based only on what was best for the bottom line. This practice focuses on working with older adults, providing out-patient care in patients' homes and community-based settings. We also provide evidence-based wellness classes for older adults to help them live a healthy lifestyle and enhance functioning. Our focus is working with people where they are and helping them recover in ways that are sustainable. In addition to providing care, we work in partnership with other community-based organizations to help our patients access resources. Practicing within the community has informed me on how to ally with organizations that work to support older adults, and they value us as partners in providing holistic health care.

Based on this successful model, I recommend that we work towards being primary care practitioners for neuromusculoskeletal disorders with appropriate reimbursement. I also advocate for reimbursement models for prevention and health promotion services that are provided in community-based settings. Achieving this will require bravery from our profession, as bravery is needed to create radical shifts in our system.

Secondly, I value partnership building, education, and reaching beyond ourselves to advocate for the underserved and marginalized. I started working with Special Olympics in 2000, after APTA North Carolina developed a flexibility screening program for the Healthy Athletes Initiative at the 1999 Special Olympics World Summer Games hosted in North Carolina. With support from APTA, I am co-founder of the FUNfitness screen, a fitness screen that is core to the Special Olympics Healthy Athletes program. I have been a Global Clinical Advisor with the Special Olympics Health team and an international group of clinical advisors to develop, expand, and monitor a program that advocates inclusive health for individuals with intellectual disabilities. Since initiating FUNfitness, I have worked through APTA and World Physiotherapy networks to recruit physical therapists and physical therapist assistants to be clinical directors. I have also advocated within Special Olympics for the role of physical therapists for injury prevention and health promotion. Recently, I fully embraced this role by becoming the Health Director for Special Olympics North Carolina (SONC), a program that engages close to 40,000 athletes across the state. I work with SONC to provide health screenings,

education and fitness programs for athletes and their families, and develop partnerships to increase access to health services, including collaboration with the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services.

Lastly, as part of my professional growth, I have served in leadership roles within APTA and APTA North Carolina. That has included serving in the House as a Delegate for 31 years, including nine years as Chief Delegate. That experience enables me to be an effective voice on the BoD and in the House of Delegates as we move the association forward.

I am a connector. My vision is that APTA will be an effective advocate that has the respect to be able to advance initiatives that improve the way we practice in the future. A strength is seeing the big picture and identifying strategic partners. I am also empathetic and see the need to strengthen communication within our organization to increase connection and inclusiveness. We need innovation as we develop Membership Engagement Groups and responsiveness if something is not working. In that way we will build our APTA community to transform society!

I have been privileged to be elected to the BoD of APTA, and I would be honored to serve another term. I ask for your support and vote.