

2025 Candidate Statement – Candidate for Director



Craig Johnson, PT, MBA

Question: Describe how the core attributes for elected leadership you possess contribute to the fiduciary and strategic responsibilities of a Director on the APTA Board of Directors?

Response:

I would like to thank the Nominating Committee for slating me for a second term as Director. Let's get right to the heart of it: the new strategic plan, set to launch in January 2026, calls for a bold vision of the association and the profession—one that requires adaptive leadership, collaborative alignment, and a governance structure designed for transformative progress. This is why I've chosen to run again for APTA Board of Directors.

We cannot drive meaningful outcomes by relying on strategies of the past. To succeed, we must be agile, receptive to feedback, and ready to pivot when circumstances demand it. We must apply foresight to anticipate emerging challenges and act decisively. I am committed to ensuring every part of our organization—from the Board, Components, and Committees to Member Engagement Groups (MEGs) and Special Interest Groups (SIGs)—is unified around the priorities of the new plan.

My leadership as a strategic thinker has been constant throughout my career, particularly in advancing payment reform and PT-first models. At Therapy Partners, I led negotiations with commercial payers, leveraging patient outcomes to improve reimbursement. I spearheaded a collaboration between APTA Private Practice (APTA-PP) and APTA Orthopedic -Occupational Health SIG (OHSIG) to create and promote a Direct-to-Employer certification program—an innovative, collaborative strategy that helps physical therapists and PT businesses enter a growing market.

I lead with courage, embracing ambiguity and inviting diverse expertise to guide decision-making. I have consistently used data to drive strategy and demonstrate the value of physical therapist services. While serving on the APTA-PP Board, I led a multidisciplinary workgroup of researchers, coding and payment experts, and an external consultant to publish the white paper, "The Impact of Physical Therapist Services on Low Back Pain Episodes of Care." This resource, available to all members, became a powerful tool for advocacy and payment improvement.

In every leadership role—from my time as APTA Minnesota President to my first term on the APTA Board of Directors—I have prioritized transparency, humility, and early engagement to drive buy-in and shared ownership of change. These principles have helped me build trust and foster inclusive leadership.

Member engagement will be critical to the success of the new strategic plan. During my first term, I led the process of aligning MEGs with the Board's vision, increasing flexibility and fostering growth among Councils, Networks, Societies, and Collaborations. Engaged members remain active, and retention fuels organizational strength. Our membership structure must continue to evolve to reflect the diverse career paths of physical therapists and physical therapist assistants—now and into the future.

At the core of my leadership is integrity. My commitment to fairness, quality, and doing the right thing for patients is unwavering. Guided by belief—one of my top Gallup StrengthsFinder traits, I use my moral

compass to ensure quality care remains grounded in ethics and that the value of our profession is never discounted. Fair and equitable payment must reflect the quality and outcomes of the care we deliver.

If re-elected, I will continue to lead with foresight, courage, and conviction—fostering a culture of belonging, driving strategic outcomes, and ensuring that every decision we make as a Board strengthens the profession and elevates our impact on the health of society.

The future of physical therapy depends on leaders who can unite vision with action, and values with results. I am ready to continue that work— and I respectfully ask for your vote for another term on the APTA Board of Directors. Together, we can shape a stronger, more vibrant future for our profession.