

2025 Candidate Statement – Candidate for Secretary



Daniel C. Dale, PT, DPT

Question: How will the core attributes for elected leadership you possess impact your effectiveness in the role of the Secretary?

Response:

Core attributes for elected leadership are essential to advance the mission of APTA and our profession. I have developed my core attributes through my experiences and service to APTA at both the national and component levels. The attributes I have developed strengths in through my involvement in APTA that best serve the Association in the position of Secretary are adaptive, courageous, futuristic, inclusive, integrity, and strategic thinking.

As a profession, we must start by saying the quiet parts out loud: we are in the midst of an incredibly challenging time as a profession and an association. Payment for physical therapy services remains of paramount concern, filled with emotion, frustration, hopelessness, and anger from members and prospective members alike. The Association is slowly declining in membership as we struggle to find answers to many large-scale, complex problems. Finally, a sense of tension persists between the House of Delegates and the Board of Directors, which may cause us to move at a slower pace than necessary to address these challenges.

At first glance, one might argue that this is not the ideal moment for an aspiring leader to emerge—after all, who would willingly step into a hornet's nest? Yet, it is precisely in light of these formidable challenges that I feel compelled and energized to serve. Now, more than ever, the APTA needs steadfast leadership, and I am ready to answer that call.

My experience as a Chapter President, Chapter Secretary, Payment Committee Chair, Legislative Committee member, and APTA Legislative Key Contact have prepared me to utilize strategic thinking to produce outcomes regarding payment. Experience in these positions will allow me to focus on being strategic and futuristic early in my tenure. If elected, I aim to step into the position of Secretary and immediately focus on payment issues at the national level, including ways to enhance efforts to improve our proactiveness in this key area, which the House of Delegates affirmed in 2025 as a top priority.

When considering the issue of membership and involvement within the Association, I lean on my history and background as Student Assembly President, an Early Career leader, APTA Georgia Chapter President, and my involvement with external stakeholders to help me be adaptive, courageous, and futuristic. As an Association, we can have a far greater trajectory and impact by taking a deeper look at the experiences of our students and Early Career professionals. If we are to increase our membership, which includes maintaining the longevity of our current members, we must adapt to current membership trends within and outside our profession. We must have the vision of what membership should look like for our Association into the next decade. I believe my experiences as a leader will help me engage in those conversations easily.

Finally, the perceived tension between the House of Delegates and the Board of Directors is one that only serves to hinder our progress. As an adaptive, courageous, and inclusive leader, I plan to approach this delicate situation with the integrity it deserves. I believe my experience as a Chief Delegate and delegate, my familiarity with Roberts' Rules and House processes, my service on the APTA Georgia Bylaws Committee, my

approachable and engaging nature, and my work on the Chief Delegate Steering Council and New Delegate mentor program will allow me in the role of Secretary to approach these situations tactfully and effectively. Members and delegates should maintain a healthy spirit of scrutiny to ensure the work is being carried out; however, we must move beyond active distrust. Trust can be enhanced through early and consistent communication, solidifying expectations in both directions, and improving the overall experience of delegates. I aim to do this by enhancing mentorship and training, streamlining processes, and improving the organization of the House of Delegates Community. I believe this will aid everyone in a better experience, generating more trust and understanding around the invaluable work that we do together.

I have found inspiration in knowing that the APTA Board has the potential to be generative, creative, bold, and courageous as we work to propel the profession forward. My inspiration stems from what has been accomplished, and what is yet to come—the potential to increase payment and be better recognized for our unique contributions to the health delivery system. I pledge to use my personal strengths in the role of Secretary and member of the Board of Directors to improve upon our issues, the member experience, and overall effectiveness of our professional association.