Statement on the President’s Commission on Combating Drug Addiction and the Opioid Crisis

April 4, 2017

The American Physical Therapy Association is encouraged by President Donald Trump’s recent executive order to establish the President’s Commission on Combating Drug Addiction and the Opioid Crisis.

In 2015, drug overdoses killed more people than did car crashes and gun homicides combined, and almost two-thirds of those were related to opioids. Despite considerable efforts last year to address the crisis, including an opioid prescription guideline from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and a national warning from the US Surgeon General, Americans continue to use and abuse opioids at alarming rates.

APTA was honored to participate in the previous administration’s opioid working group to be part of the solution. In June 2016, APTA launched the nationwide #ChoosePT campaign to raise awareness about physical therapist treatment as a safe alternative to the long-term management of most pain conditions, consistent with CDC guidelines. APTA’s House of Delegates, the association’s highest policy-making body, also voted unanimously to endorse the CDC’s and the previous administration’s efforts to address the opioid epidemic.

Solving the epidemic of abuse, misuse, and addiction will require teamwork across health care. APTA looks forward to opportunities to work with the administration to tackle this crucial challenge.

Sincerely,

Sharon L. Dunn, PT, PhD
Board-Certified Clinical Specialist in Orthopaedic Physical Therapy
President, American Physical Therapy Association