President’s Message

As we start the new year, there are many events ranging from the national college championship, NFL playoffs, and Mardi Gras! The biggest ticket on schedule will be CSM. If you haven’t attended CSM in the last decade, this is one event you will have to see. It gives you a sense of what the APTA and all the state chapters can do together. There will be many CEU opportunities for nearly every practice setting. The vendor hall will cover most of the convention center’s bottom floor. There will be events occurring early morning, and I am sure nearly every night. I feel energized for our profession during these national meetings. If you cannot make it to the courses, please try to make it to the exhibit hall or to some of the local events. We are still looking for volunteers to assist us with our welcoming table in the exhibit hall.

The APTA continues to take the lead on removing the barriers individuals have to deal with on a daily basis. With the progression of our profession through direct access and offering unique services, many insurance companies are reducing the restrictions to physical therapy. The most pressing current issue is the Medicare cap. The cap to physical and speech therapy combined is now $2010 per year. The only way we are going to stop the cap is to attack this problem from multiple angles and repetitively. We are going to need every therapist, patient, friend and family member to get involved. The therapy cap clearly effects those who are 65 and over, but also those who are approaching medicare eligibility in the next decade and many others who rely on Medicare due to disabilities. The majority of our patients are treated with minimal utilization, but those with complex cases are the most restricted. Several of our patients do not address their medical issues due to cost and their concern of limited availability of Medicare. Regardless of your setting, or how you think this may or may not affect you, we all must get involved and end the very restrictive Medicare Cap once and for all for our current and future patients. It is so important for you to be a member of the APTA/LPTA, and to stand with us. We cannot achieve our common goal without everyone’s help.

Our Spring meeting is only 2 months away in Lafayette. We are planning an action packed and exciting weekend starting on Friday afternoon and ending on Sunday. We will be hosting our 2nd student conclave on Friday after the scheduled lectures, and we would like to hear from our members about what issues are important to you! Our business meeting will keep you current on LPTA and APTA issues. As always, these meetings are a great way to meet up with friends and colleagues. The start of 2018 is full of fun and professional growth, and I am so excited for our profession and our association. I hope to see you on the parade routes, at CSM, and in Lafayette for our Spring meeting!

Respectfully submitted by:
Joe Shine, PT, DPT
LPTA President

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2018 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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LPTA MEMBERSHIP

Please continue to encourage your fellow PTs, PTAs and students to join or renew their APTA/LPTA membership!

PTs  815
PTAs  144
Students  373
Total  1,332

Submission Deadline

We welcome anyone to contribute to the Bayou Bulletin.

If you would like to advertise, report, or share experiences with your fellow LPTA members, please see below for Publisher contact information.

The submission deadline for the March/April publication is February 26th.

Bayou Bulletin Publisher Information

The Bayou Bulletin is published six times a year by the LPTA. Copy and advertising inquiries should be directed to LPTA. Advertising rate sheets and deadlines for each issue are available upon request.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

2018

February 21-24, 2018
Combined Sections Meeting
New Orleans, LA

March 23-25, 2018
2018 Spring LPTA Meeting
Lafayette, LA

Dave Pariser Memorial Scholarship Fund
To make an online contribution to the Scholarship fund, go to the Foundation website and at the top right hand side of the page, there is purple box with the words “Donate Now”. Choose the amount of the donation and choose the designated fund, the Dave Pariser Memorial Scholarship Fund.

http://www.lsuhealthfoundation.org/

Or you can mail to the Dave Pariser Memorial Scholarship Fund:
The Foundation for the LSU Health Sciences Center
450A South Claiborne Avenue
New Orleans, LA 70112
District and Component News

Blair T. Duthu, PT
Houma District Chair
Happy New Year Houma!!! Our next Houma district meeting will be held on Thursday, April 12th, 2018 at 6:30pm at The Claiborne in Thibodaux. Please like our Facebook page, Houma area PTs and PTAs, for further details. I have enjoyed getting to know those of you in our district that have attended our past events, and I look forward to meeting some new faces. Please email me at blair.duthu@rehabcare.com with any questions or concerns.

Marianne D Bell, PT, DPT
Lake Charles District Chair
Hey everyone! Please keep an eye out for email and facebook updates on our upcoming meeting dates and times. We will have an hour CE at one of the next meetings. If anyone has location or topic request please feel free to email me, cajunmed9546@gmail.com.

Katherine Voorhorst
Membership Chair
Are you or someone you know interested in serving on the LPTA Board? If so, please consider a nomination for the Membership Chair position! Over the next few months, our current Membership Chair, Katherine Voorhorst, will be available to answer questions regarding the role and responsibilities. For a full position description please visit lpta.org under About LPTA – Leadership and Governance. For those interested, please contact Kinta, Nominations Chair, at k_mader@hotmail.com.

Matthew Powers, PT
New Orleans District Chair
I hope everyone had a great holiday season. With Combined Sections Meeting quickly approaching, we will not have any PT Pub Nights until after the meeting. The date for our next Pub Night will be March 8th at Tchoup Yard. Hope to see everyone at CSM and the subsequent Pub Night.

Jennifer Watson
Lafayette District Chair
"It's a new year and new beginnings for the Lafayette District! My term as your Lafayette District Chair has come to an end and I am passing the torch to the next individual who has a heart for our profession and the members in our community. I have learned so much in the past 2 1/2 years and appreciate the connections made with the amazing individuals who serve our organization. I'd like to thank the leadership of the LPTA for showing me the ropes. I'd like to thank those LPTA members and "soon-to-be" members who have participated in PT Pub nights, District meetings, and have volunteered their time during community outreach opportunities. It has been a pleasure serving you!

Our next District Meeting will be held on January 31st at Our Lady of Lourdes Outpatient Rehab Department located on 406 Dunreath Street in Lafayette beginning at 6 pm. Invite a friend! Non-members are welcome. Refreshments will be provided."
Danielle Morris, PT
Baton Rouge District Chair

The Baton Rouge District will hold its next meeting at 6 pm on January 24, at the new Sage Outpatient Clinic located at 8313 Picardy Avenue.

Special guest Dawn McCool will present the following in-service: **Comprehensive Automobile Mobility Solutions for Health Care Professionals**:

This Presentation topic pertains to personal automotive mobility opportunities for people with disabilities to safely drive or be transported. This information will assist the allied health care practitioner in understanding and advocating for individuals seeking automotive vehicle modification solutions, while also teaching practitioners about the unique process involved in evaluating and purchasing appropriate automotive options.
Northshore District News

Rebecca Troulliet, PT
Northshore District Chair

The Northshore District had its first PT Pub Night last month at the Barley Oak in Mandeville. We had 7 individuals show up for great conversations and drinks! Oh yeah, can’t forget the silly holiday sweaters worn by some! We are currently in the process of planning our next event, but we need your help. With the Northshore being such a large area we are looking for great locations to host District Meetings and Pub Nights. If you have any suggestions for a location in your city please email me at: Rebecca.troulliet@gmail.com. We would love to increase our attendance at the next event by 2-fold. Additionally, something new I will be adding to each edition of the Bayou Bulletins is a Northshore Member Spotlight where 2-3 LPTA members and their current careers will be highlighted. We have so many outstanding members in our district and its time that everyone gets to meet them too! If you or someone you know deserves to be highlighted in the Bulletin, please nominate them by email.

Northshore Student Member Spotlight

Blaine Williams, SPT

Blaine is a 1st Year student at LSU-Shreveport. He has developed a special interest in Orthopedic Physical Therapy, which he wants to pursue after his graduation. His favorite class in school has been Anatomy and Cadaver Lab. As a first year student he attended National Student Conclave in Portland, OR and has plans to attend CSM in New Orleans this month. Fun fact about Blaine: he loves hunting, fishing and all things outdoors!

Northshore Member Spotlight

Mallory Kraft, PT, DPT

Mallory is a 2017 DPT graduate of University of Alabama. She is working at Ponchatoula Therapy a privately owned outpatient orthopedic clinic in Ponchatoula, which recently expanded to a second location in Livingston: Higg’s Physical Therapy. Mallory is passionate about pursuing further education for pediatric, neurological and women’s health PT. Fun fact about Mallory: she is an extremely talented artist when it comes to drawing and painting, she enjoys live music and loves all things Disney and Harry Potter!
Payment/Practice Committee Report

I have previously posted details on the proposed physical fee schedule for 2018. In the recently released final rule, all basically remains unchanged. However, the Medicare cap final rule requires a little attention due to a deviation from expectation:

The Medicare Cap saw an increase from $1980 to $2010. However, for 2018, there is not currently an exceptions process. Translation = a hard cap of $2010. It is possible that exceptions will be reinstated this calendar year but we are waiting for a vote to see that change.

For Humana providers: this past year has been challenging with respect to medical necessity denials, recoupments, and authorizations. The challenges remain without solution. APTA and LPTA are both working on gathering data in order to have supporting documentation of these challenges. It is difficult to work towards getting Humana to come to the table without this data. Please reach out to the LPTA if you are struggling with any of these issues.

On a positive note, Humana has been stating for several months that the pre-authorization requirement for all policies will be abolished for 2018 (really started in December) but we were waiting for the official letter from Humana announcing the policy change. This letter has recently been mailed to all providers.

Please be aware that regardless of authorization, Humana has a pretty stringent medical necessity review process. Therefore, the recommendation still stands that documentation is extremely important to reduce the incidence of denials and recoupments.

For BCBS providers: I have been pushing BCBS to avoid following suit with other states who have done away with customer service representatives. These reps are key contacts in ensuring that providers had accurate PT benefits for the BCBS policy holders. Specifically, these contacts are critical in determining if a policy holder has a limitation or exclusion on their policy. This information is often unavailable or inaccurate on the provider portal. Regrettably, in the coming months, BCBS of LA will be doing away with these representatives. Please be aware that patient education on the importance of understanding their policy is critical to avoid unexpected denials.

Katie Brittain, PT, DPT, MBA, CLT
Payment Chair
Nominations Committee Report

Would you or someone you know like to serve the LPTA? The nominations committee will be considering nominations for the position of delegate to be elected at the fall meeting. Please contact me if you’d like to nominate someone for consideration to be slated for candidacy.

And speaking of elections, discussion continues regarding transitioning to electronic voting to better serve our members. The Nominations Committee, the By-Laws Committee and the Board of Directors are identifying the by-laws changes that will be necessary to implement this type of voting, as well as are exploring the systems available to facilitate the electronic voting process. Updates will be posted in the Bayou Bulletin and the LPTA website as they become available.

Kinta Leblanc
Nominations Committee Chair

SAVE THE DATE
For Our Spring Meeting!!

Lafayette
March 23-25, 2018
Federal Affairs Report

The biggest issue on the national level is the Medicare Therapy Cap. Congress had crafted a bipartisan agreement to permanently repeal the hard cap on Medicare therapy services. The American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) and our Therapy Cap Repeal Coalition partners supported this therapy cap policy.

As you all know, Congress recessed on December 22 without acting on a permanent fix to Medicare therapy cap. They also did not enact a temporary patch or extension of the current exceptions process. Thus, a hard cap of $2,010 on outpatient therapy services (PT/SLP combined) will be applied beginning on January 1, 2018. A separate hard cap of $2,010 will be applied to outpatient OT services. It should be noted that the hard cap will not apply to hospital outpatient clinics (OPs). Hospital OPs were not originally included under the therapy cap when it was first enacted as part of the Balanced Budget Act (BBA) in 1997. Hospital OPs were subsequently added to the cap exceptions process in 2012. However with the expiration of the exceptions process on December 31, 2017, the requirement for hospital OP to participate in the therapy cap exceptions process also expires.

Congress will return to Washington on January 3rd and must adopt another spending bill by January 19th. APTA will continue to keep the pressure on Congress urging them to take quick action on the therapy cap in early January. Historically, when Congress failed to act and a hard cap went into effect temporarily, there was a period of uncertainty and then the fix was then retroactively applied to January 1 of that year.

As of 1/4/2018, the Louisiana Delegation stance on the Medicare Cap was as follows:

unknown: Supports therapy cap repeal:

Should you receive a call to action, please respond as many of our LA Congressmen need to know how important this Medicare Therapy Cap repeal is for our patients.

Cristina Faucheux
Governmental Affairs Chair
State Governmental Affairs Report

The 2018 Legislative Session will begin on March 12th. This Session will be a regular session which means legislators can bring forward unlimited bills on any subject matter. The deadline to Prefile bills is March 2, 2018, but as always, bills can change in content as it moves through out the process. The Tatman Group as well as your GA Committee will be monitoring bills closely.

We are excited that we will hold a PT Day at the Capital this session. Once we have a date secured, we will let you know. This will be a great time to rekindle those relationships you made over the last couple of years. We want to have a huge presence to simply thank the legislators for their continued support.

In addition, the LPTA will be hosting a lunch or breakfast for several of the Caucus groups. This is a great opportunity to be in front of a large audience of legislators to discuss the issues that are most important to us. If you are asked to accompany us to this event, please consider attending as they enjoy seeing their own constituents.

Should you hear of a regulatory or legislative issue you feel the LPTA should research, please contact us.

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Chair: Cristina Faucheux cristina@moreaupt.com

Cristina Faucheux
Governmental Affairs Chair
Bylaws Committee Report

Bylaws Corner Pub:

Greetings! Welcome to the exciting venue of the Bylaws Corner Pub. Gail Pearce told me a snifter of brandy really helps when doing Bylaws reviews but I think I’ll prefer a cold peppermint schnapps shot.

Speaking of Gail, please thank her for her many years of service as the LPTA Bylaws Chair. She has led us through numerous bylaws changes with grace and tenacity. Every member owes her a word of thanks for such superior service. Thankfully we won’t miss her on the Bylaws committee since she’s staying on which was one of my negotiations besides Joe Shine buying my drinks for the rest of my term.

Currently the Bylaws committee at the behest of the Board of Directors is working on an exciting bylaws change that would allow electronic voting for Chapter offices. As with all changes they first have to be approved by APTA, then presented to the membership 30 days before a membership meeting and then approved at said membership meeting. So be on the look out for that!

Bylaws have the maligned reputation of being boring and obstructionist to progress but that is just not true. They are the guidelines for Associations that allow them to prosper in a logical and orderly fashion and avoid internal conflict.

I am looking forward to this new challenge and would like to thank to Board of Directors for granting me this opportunity. If you have questions regarding the Bylaws please do not hesitate to ask myself or a member of the Bylaws committee.

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CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

FOR

MEMBERSHIP CHAIR!

If you are interested in this position, please contact Kinta, Nominations Chair, at k_mader@hotmail.com.
REGISTER TODAY
Combined Sections Meeting!

New Orleans
February 21-24, 2018

LOOKING FOR CSM VOLUNTEERS!!

The LPTA is looking for volunteers to work our Association's Welcoming Booth in the exhibit hall at CSM.

Booth set up is Wednesday, February 21, 2018 by 4:00pm.

The exhibit hall is open from 9:30 am – 4:00 pm on Thursday, February 22; 9:30 am – 4:00 pm on Friday, February 23; and 9:30 am-3:00 pm on Saturday, February 24.

If you are available to work a 2 to 4 hour block of time on any of these days, please email at office@lpta.org with your availability. Thank you for any assistance you can offer, and we look forward to seeing you at CSM in New Orleans!
Ohio Workers’ Comp Program Requires Nonsurgical, Nonopioid Treatment of LBP as First Step

In what the Associated Press (AP) describes as "a groundbreaking guideline," the Ohio agency that oversees that state's workers' compensation program has rejected spinal fusion surgery and opioid prescriptions as an early response to back pain. Instead, the state now requires that all workers with work-related back injuries undergo at least 60 days of nonsurgical care, including physical therapy, while avoiding opioids, before pursuing other treatments.

APTA Physical Therapy Outcomes Registry Again Receives CMS Designation for MIPS Reporting

APTA's Physical Therapy Outcomes Registry (Registry) has been approved again by the US Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) as a qualified clinical data registry (QCDR). The designation for 2018 means that physical therapists (PTs) who participate in the Merit-based Incentive Payment System (MIPS) program can submit their data directly from the Registry, but the CMS approval is also an acknowledgment that APTA offers a robust, reliable system for tracking and benchmarking patient outcomes.

From PTJ: Office Work Doesn’t Have To Be a Pain in the Neck

Office workers with neck pain may benefit from workplace-based strengthening exercises, especially those focused on the neck and shoulder, say authors of a recent systematic review.

Among all occupations, office workers are at the highest risk for neck pain, with approximately half of all office workers experiencing neck pain each year. “Workplace-based interventions are becoming important to reduce the burden of neck pain,” researchers write, “due to the increasing responsibility of companies toward employee health, and the potential cost-savings and productivity gains associated with a healthy workforce.”

Survey: HIIT Tops the List of Fitness Trends for 2018

What's the future of fitness? According to an international survey of exercise professionals, high intensity interval training (HIIT) will be the strongest trend in 2018, outpacing wearable technologies, which held the number 1 position in 2017. Group training, body weight training, and strength training are also on the list of top 10 trends expected to be strong this year, while interest in Exercise is Medicine and exercise and weight loss is expected to drop off.

CDC: 40% of Patients with Arthritis Don’t Received Exercise Counseling From Providers

Better, but still plenty of room for improvement—that's the US Center for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC's) take on a recent analysis of the rate at which health care providers are counseling patients with arthritis to engage in physical activity (PA). The good news: the percentage of individuals with arthritis who received provider counseling for exercise grew by 17.6% between 2002 and 2014. The bad news: even after that growth, nearly 4 in 10 patients with arthritis still aren't receiving any information from their providers on the benefits of PA.

The Hard Therapy Cap is Here: Answers to Some Common Questions

Because of inaction by Congress, the hard cap on outpatient therapy services under Medicare has been implemented. The cap, which began on January 1, 2018, includes no KX modifier exceptions and has created uncertainty for providers, patients, and their families.

APTA has requested that the US Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) provide information and guidance for providers on how the (temporary, it is hoped) hard cap will be managed.

Visit www.apta.org to see full articles.
Most-Read Student Pulse Blog Posts of 2017 Point to Bright Future for the Profession

It doesn't matter whether you're a current student in a physical therapist (PT) or physical therapist assistant (PTA) program or a seasoned veteran of the profession: APTA's Student Assembly Pulse blog series is worth checking out.

The posts, largely written by current students and new professionals, often touch on subjects that have broad interest, and many feature the kind of candor that speaks well of the next generation of PTs and PTAs. Authors are willing to put themselves "out there" for the sake of their fellow students and the profession; and even when they're providing practical tips on, for instance, useful apps for students, authors' excitement about physical therapy shines through.

Get the Latest on the Future of Payment — And the Now of Home Health

Are you ready for the future of payment—both near-term and down the road? APTA is ready to help you stay up to speed.

The association offers 2 opportunities to learn about the payment landscape in 2018 and beyond: one focused on the bigger picture and another that zeroes in on changes to home health services.
LA SPECIAL OLYMPICS!

State Indoor Games
March

State Summer Games
May

State Fall Classic
October

For volunteer opportunities, please visit: laso.org/signup_for_state_games

Vickie D. Cavitt | Billing Manager, Owner

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