

Who We Are

The Private Practice Section of the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA Private Practice) represents 3,900 licensed physical therapists (PTs) and physical therapy assistants (PTAs) who provide care in independent businesses. Our businesses are both large and small, some with single locations, some with many locations across multiple states and regions. Physical therapists serve as primary access providers within the healthcare system, playing a crucial role in the prevention, treatment, and management of movement disorders.

PTs and PTAs provide comprehensive care across the health continuum, from preventive and wellness services to specialized neuromusculoskeletal treatment. As experts in rehabilitation, prehabilitation, and habilitation, physical therapists are integral to public health, advancing wellness, fitness, disease prevention, and disability management for individuals of all ages.

Legislative & Advocacy Priorities, 119th Congress

APTA Private Practice is committed to ensuring that every American has access to high quality, cost effective physical therapy services. Our Five Policy Pillars establish our priorities to ensure patients have access to physical therapist services. Access requires sustainable payment policies, removing arbitrary limits to care, and a stable workforce. We advocate for policies that build healthy communities through sustainable government policies that empower physical therapists in business to provide accessible, cost-effective, high-quality care to their neighbors.

1) Guarantee Appropriate Payment for Therapy Services

The financial pressures of declining Medicare payments harm practices and their patients. The current system must be reformed to promote quality patient care while also addressing the financial realities of private practices.

2) Improve Access to Physical Therapy Services

Timely access to physical therapy services is critical for optimal patient outcomes. We are united in seeking opportunities to remove barriers that prevent patients from receiving physical therapy in a timely and efficient manner.

3) Reduce Administrative Burdens

Many administrative policies unintentionally impede patients' timely access to services and place a financial and time burden on staff and business owners. These problems exacerbate provider burnout when the PT workforce is already too small. We advocate for reducing bureaucratic obstacles so that physical therapists can focus on delivering high-quality care to their patients rather than being bogged down by paperwork and inefficiencies.

4) Parity With Other Providers

Some government policies have treated physical therapists as second class providers for many years. Physical therapists deserve the same rights as other doctorate-level providers, and our patients deserve unrestricted access to high quality physical therapy care.

5) Support Small Businesses

Multiple outside factors threaten the viability of physical therapy businesses. To ensure access to the best physical therapy services in communities and ensure patient choice, we champion innovative solutions that allow private practices and small businesses to thrive.

Using these pillars as our guide, APTA Private Practice supports the following policies in the 119th Congress:

- Reverse current and prevent future payment cuts to the Medicare Physician Fee Schedule (MPFS)
- Reform the Medicare Physician Fee Schedule by providing an annual inflationary payment update to the MPFS conversion factor based on the Medicare Economic Index (MEI)
- Eliminate the flawed Multiple Procedure Payment Reduction (MPPR) policy
- Remove the fifteen percent cut to services provided by PTAs
- Develop value-based care models that actually work for PTs using appropriate incentives
- Allow PTs to use locum tenens arrangements to prevent interruptions in care regardless of location
- Restructure Medicare Advantage Prior Authorization so provider time is no longer diverted from patient care and patient care is not delayed
- Permit physical therapists to opt-out of Medicare so they can directly contract with Medicare-eligible beneficiaries like more than 12 other health provider groups
- Ensure PTs' flexibility to continue using and receiving payment for telehealth services
- Reduce falls by including a falls prevention screening performed by physical therapists in the Medicare annual wellness visit
- Outlaw anti-competitive business arrangements that limit patient choice, increase cost, and create an uneven playing field for private practices
- Safeguard tax policies that aid small businesses
- Create incentives for individuals to join the physical therapy profession and continue working in physical therapy, thereby increasing skilled jobs in local communities