



APTA **Federal**SM

Primary Care SIG

APTA CSM 2026
Member Meeting

Agenda

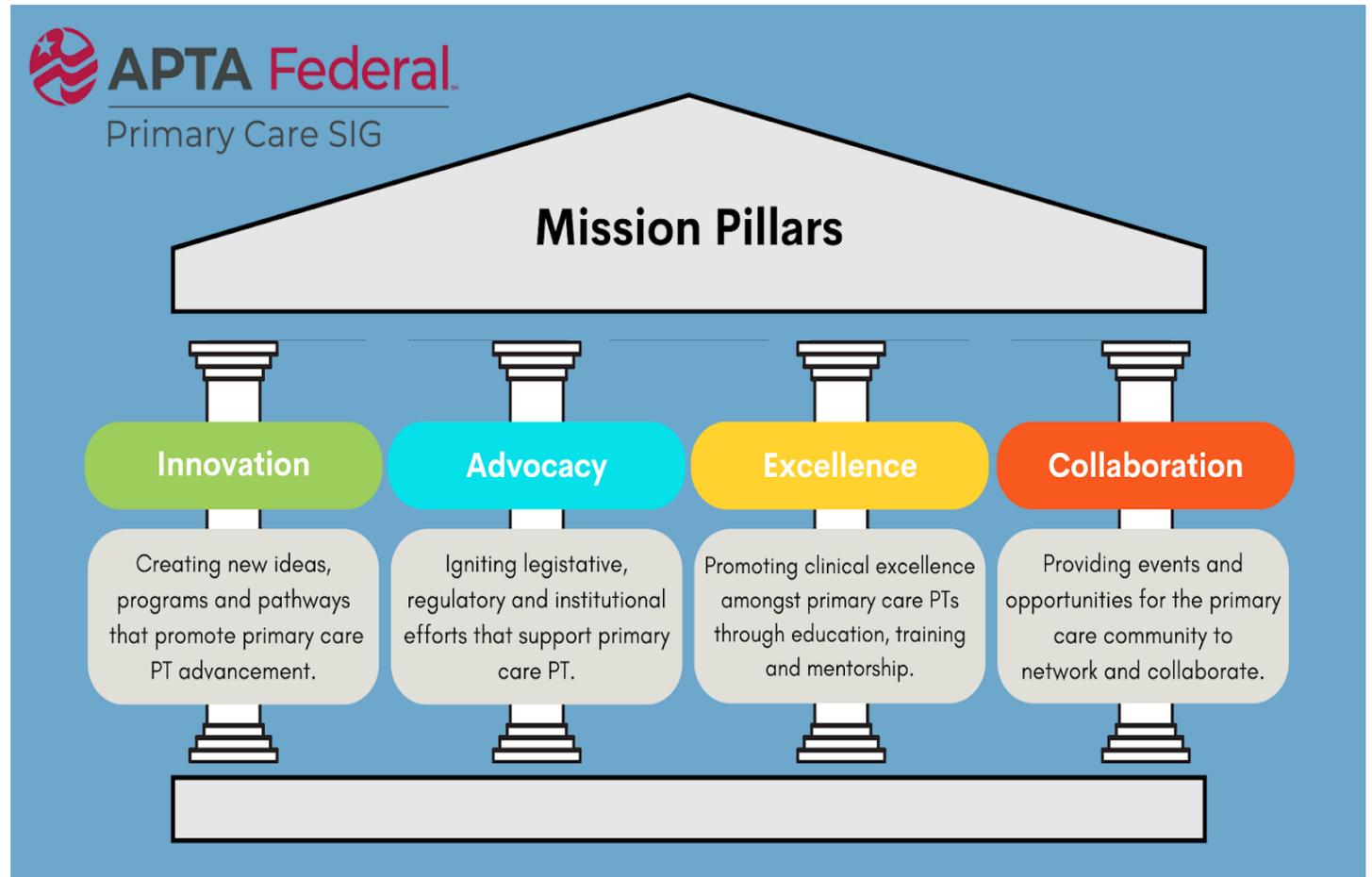
- Who we are
- Year in Review
- The Exciting Future
- Panel Discussion on PC Specialty and Residency
- Networking Time

- This presentation with its associated links is on our website:



aptafederal.org/primary-care

- **VISION:** Physical Therapists are universally recognized front-line providers in the primary care arena.
- **MISSION:** Advancing the Physical Therapy profession by providing **front-line physical and functional services** within primary care teams through **innovation, advocacy, clinical excellence, and collaboration** to optimize the healthcare experience for all.



Your Board

Co-Chair: Evan Kelley

Co-Chair: Samantha Schmidt

Research Chair: Comet Mekonen

Comms Chair: Jennifer Turner

Education Chair: Kevin Stemple

Education Co-Chair: Nancy Henderson

Practice Chair: Keri Prince

Advanced Privileging Chair: Steve Flatt

Student Liaison: Ashley Nelson

Primary Care Specialty: Ashley Cassel

Positions on bold up for elections this summer.

Join our board!

Year in review

• **Primary Care PT Definition**

- One of the most common inquiries to PC SIG 2022-2025
 - “How is primary care physical therapy (PCPT) defined?”
 - So, we defined it through a rigorous and reviewed process

Primary care physical therapy is a professional practice area in which physical therapists provide first contact* and ongoing, broad spectrum** preventive and reactive health management services as an integral member of the primary healthcare team. Physical therapists’ primary area of expertise is to address pain, disability, function, health, and wellness in order to optimize participation in life activities. The care is person-centered, team-based, and community-aligned, with the goal of achieving improved health with higher quality care at lower costs.

*PCPT first contact care can be delivered both on an individual (PT only) or collaborative primary care team basis as a part of an index or first-time visit for a health need.

**Broad Spectrum, as demonstrated in Figure 2 means that the clinician has clinical competency to evaluate and manage cases across body systems.

Year in review

- Primary Care Specialty
 - Recognized area of specialty and residency practice with approved during the 2025 House of Delegates in July
- THIS IS A HUGE DEAL!
- But more on that later with the panel discussion

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Primary Care Specialty

Year in review

APTA Practice Advisory: Primary Care Physical Therapy

Resource

Primary care physical therapy highlights the role of physical therapists as integral members of a patient's primary care team. Physical therapists and physical therapist assistants should familiarize themselves with the specific roles, scope, and competencies that define primary care physical therapy. Gain valuable insights into this emerging care delivery model and equip yourself with the knowledge you need regarding practice readiness, educational opportunities, and billing considerations.

[APTA Practice Advisory: Primary Care Physical Therapy](#)

Year in review

- 3rd Annual Primary Care Summit & Think Tank
 - Georgia Southern University, Savannah, GA 24-25 October



Year in review

- Abstract of the Month (AOM)
 - Providing current, key literature on PCPT
 - Highlights the those working as PCPTs
 - Clinicians
 - Researchers
 - Leaders



Abstract of the Month

January 2026

Impact of direct access on the quality of primary care musculoskeletal physiotherapy: a scoping review from a patient, provider, and societal perspective:

Cattrysse et al. Arch Physiother .2024 Jul 1; 14:20-28.

This article demonstrated that offering direct access for primary care PT showed benefits in quality of life, functioning, and well-being compared to the traditional referred care model. Additionally, benefits included less medication, reduced wait times, and decreased health care costs. There was no decrease in pain improvement, and safety was not compromised, which is a concern when a profession assumes a direct access title in the primary care setting without the traditional referral-based model.

However, more research is needed to assess the benefits of primary care PT provided independently by physical therapists, i.e., direct access.



My name is Comet Mekonen, DPT, Orthopedic Clinical Specialist. I believe that PTs are medicine's best-kept secret! My mission is to promote excellent, high-quality primary care PT as the current research chair. Primary care PT is a movement! Currently, I'm a primary care physical therapist, a licensed independent provider with PACT primary care for the Department of Veterans Affairs, practicing in Colorado Springs.

An exciting year to come!



- **VIRTUAL!**
- **Wednesday, May 20th**
- **10:00 AM – 6:00 PM EST**
- **Offered by Redefine Health Education**

Register through our website:

www.aptafederal.org/primary-care

Be part of the future



- Board Elections Summer 2026
 - Co-Chair
 - Education Chair
 - Research Chair
 - Advanced Privileging Chair

Call for nominations June/July 2026

Save the Date!!

- **4th Annual Primary Care Summit & Think Tank**
 - **September 18-19, 2006**
 - **University of Utah, Salt Lake City**
- Engage with the leaders who are shaping PCPT nationally.
- Dynamic program with a combination of:
 - Small group clinical skills
 - Large group clinical skills
 - Interactive Think Tanks covering everything from program development to legislative engagement
 - TED Talks

More initiative going forward



- **Abstracts of the Month**
- **Direct engagement with state chapters**
- **Developing working relationship with FPTR**
- **Determine PC PT affiliation site definition and criteria with which to build a list of clinical sites.**

On to the main event



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Primary Care Specialty

Meet the Panel

- Ashley Cassel, PT, DPT, OCS
 - Chair, Primary Care Specialty Panel
- John, Heick, PT, DPT, OCS, EdD
 - Item Review Coordinator, PCS Panel
- Bill Boissonnault, PT, DPT, DHSc, FAAOMPT, FAPTA
 - Providing consultation and guidance from the start!
- Nancy Henderson, PT, PhD, DPT, OCS, Cert MDT
 - Your Moderator

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Networking Time

