

The American Physical Therapy Association Commitment Statement to Support Clinician Well-Being

The American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) is committed to addressing clinician and student burnout, resilience, and well-being. In 2018, the APTA House of Delegates, the policy-making body of the association, adopted a charge to the association to address professional well-being:

That the American Physical Therapy Association develop strategies to address factors that challenge the well-being and resilience of physical therapists, physical therapist assistants, and students of physical therapy (American Physical Therapy Association, Minutes of the House of Delegates, 2018, p 43).

The goals of this charge were to improve the understanding of challenges to professional well-being, identify evidence-based solutions, and monitor their effectiveness. An improved awareness of the underlying problems, and the implementation of strategies that address these problems, will help to sustain the profession and has the potential to increase interdisciplinary collaboration in order to improve health care professional well-being universally. Further, this charge moves the profession toward the APTA vision ([APTA Vision Statement](#), 2013) by protecting the health care professionals who are working to transform society. Increased rates of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization, decreased feelings of personal achievement and accomplishment, and poor maintenance of well-being among PTs, PTAs, and PT and PTA students have the potential to hinder clinician-patient interactions, patient outcomes, and clinician job satisfaction.

Examples of related actions:

1. APTA is an active participant in the National Academy of Medicine's Global Forum on Innovation in Health Professional Education. The forum published proceedings from its 2018 workshop titled [A Design Thinking, Systems Approach to Well-Being within Education and Practice: Proceedings of a Workshop](#) in October 2018.
2. APTA, recognizing that student debt influences clinician wellness and resiliency, has create a [Financial Solutions Center](#) to address financial literacy of prospective students, students, and practicing members; provide refinancing options; and offer financial planning.
3. APTA and 2 of its components dedicated to physical therapy education—the American Council of Academic Physical Therapy and the Academy of Physical Therapy Education—collaborated as partners of the Education Leadership Partnership (ELP) to adopt student debt as a priority issue. The ELP partners created a Student Debt Task Force in October

- 2018 with the purpose of “examining the issues influencing student debt to include debt-to-income ratio, financial aid, cost of education, reimbursement for clinical services, curricular issues, impact of student debt on physical therapy programs, and to make recommendation to the ELP regarding potential actions to address these issues.”
4. The journal *Physical Therapy* published the editorial [Canaries in the Health Care Coal Mines](#) in December 2018, which speaks to clinician burnout.
 5. APTA maintains an advocacy webpage specific to [administrative burden](#).
 6. APTA published [Easing Administrative Burden: APTA Makes It Easy to Make Your Voice Heard](#) on the association’s #PTTransforms blog on November 2, 2018.
 7. APTA published [Beating Burnout](#) in *PT in Motion* magazine in February 2019 as its cover story.
 8. APTA’s Department of Payment and Practice Management engages in advocacy efforts at the federal, state, and commercial payer level to seek fair compensation and reduce administrative burden.
 9. The American Council on Academic Physical Therapy created a [task force](#) to address student well-being and burnout in 2018.