

President's Report

I was reading a guest editorial in the Private Practice Section magazine [*Advance*, 2005;14(4)] recently. The author discussed why we as professional physical therapists use far too many letters after our name to denote our academic and other achievements. His point is well taken, although it raises the issue about certifications, the necessity, meaning, and then the utilization of said certification. Does the general population/consumer know what it means or what it permits us to do? I would tend to doubt it!

In order to educate the consumer and referring physicians, we as Physical Therapists who treat foot and ankle disorders should establish some form of certification, or better yet, a fellowship. This topic has been debated for several years in SIG Business Meetings and between colleagues. Other SIGs and Sections are moving in this direction. In the medical community, a fellowship indicates a level of excellence and notoriety. Although some of you may oppose such a process and some are in favor, I would like to hear from you on our SIG bulletin board or directly to me. It will take a tremendous effort to establish the criteria that would be included in a fellowship. I for one am in favor of a foot fellowship, not that any of us need to add letters to our professional demarcation.

Our SIG is still looking for assistance from the membership to establish a survey that will be sent to all entry-level physical therapy programs in order to ascertain the content being taught pertinent to the foot and ankle. Like the other Orthopaedic Section SIGs, we should be able to advise PT schools as well as continuing education instructors on the content and relevance of their foot and ankle information. In addition, certain courses that are available to PTs should be evaluated by our SIG to enable them to make recommendations to our members. This effort may help to synthesize the overwhelming variety of treatment techniques, evaluative strategies, and evidence that is valid. Of course, I must toot our SIGs own horn as it relates to the next FASIG program at the CSM in San Diego. The program will include an excellent faculty who will thoroughly discuss ankle injury and arthrosis. I hope that you all plan to attend this great program. As per the purpose of this periodical for our membership, we welcome treatment pearls, case studies, new techniques, etc that you are using in the clinic and that can be shared in *OPTP*.

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