

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Laurel Daniels Abbruzzese, PT, EdD, FNAP  
[labbruzzese@orthopt.org](mailto:labbruzzese@orthopt.org)

## DESCRIPTION OF SPECIALTY PRACTICE

What knowledge, skills, and attributes are required for expert practice in performing arts physical therapy? Performing Arts Physical Therapy is a subspecialty practice within orthopedic and sports physical therapy, focused on the care of dancers, musicians, vocalists, gymnasts, actors, ice skaters, and circus performers. In 2000, PASIG leader, Jennifer Gamboa led a practice analysis and created the technical report that formed the basis of the 2004 Description of Specialized Clinical Practice (DSCP) in Physical Therapy for Performing artists. In 2015, a team of PASIG leaders, led by Mariah Nierman, began the revalidation process of the DSCP and PASIG petitioned the American Board of Physical Therapy Residency and Fellowship Education (ABPTRFE) for recognition of Performing Arts as a fellowship area of practice. The Description of Fellowship Practice (DFP) for Performing Arts was published in 2016 and has been used as the basis of curriculum and program requirements for the 5 Performing Arts Fellowship Programs that have been developed over the past 10 years.

It is now time to revalidate the DFP for Performing Arts again! The revalidation team will include Laurel Daniels Abbruzzese (lead), Andrea Lasner, Marisa Hentis, Sarah Edery-Altas, and Tiffany Marulli, with guidance from the APTA/ABPTRFE. The kickoff for the revalidation will begin August 2025 at APTA headquarters. The revalidation team will develop a Practice Analysis Plan and create a pilot survey. We will be relying on our PASIG members currently working with performing artists to inform this work. The updated DFP may include revised expectations for professional competencies and primary health conditions in performing arts. Updating the DFP at least once every 10 years helps to ensure that practitioners continue meet the demands of this evolving specialized area of practice.

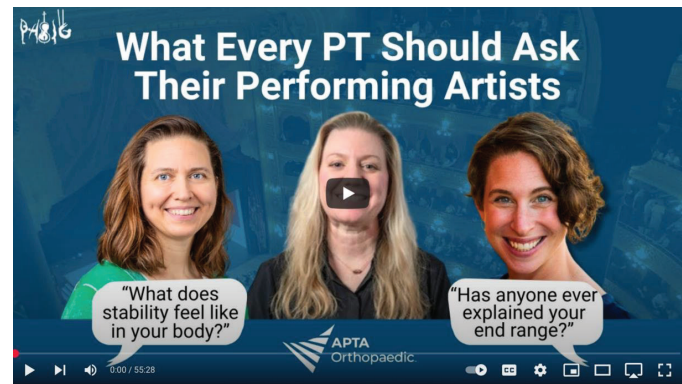
<https://abptrfe.apta.org/for-programs/clinical-programs/dfp/performing-arts>

## PHYSICAL THERAPY CARE FOR CIRCUS ARTISTS

Over the last 15 years, participation in circus arts has grown exponentially, including an increased number of circus schools, circus entertainment companies, and circus skills training programs offered through studios and gymnastics gyms. The majority of circus artists are engaged recreationally, and have unique musculoskeletal demands, injury risks, and care needs that are not always well understood by practicing clinicians. If you are an orthopedic physical therapist, there's a good chance you'll be treating circus artists in your practice. The PASIG wants to make sure that our members are equipped for the strategic assessment and treatment of this growing population of artists.

This past March, the PASIG hosted a virtual panel, *PT Care for Circus Artists*, featuring: Heather Heineman, PT,

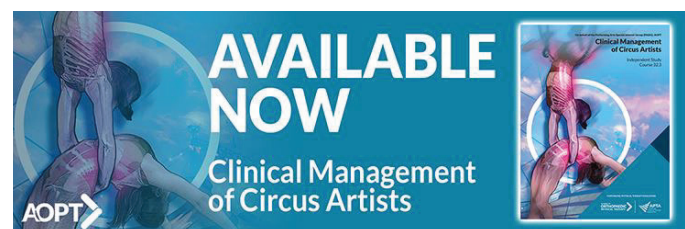
DPT, OCS, WCS; Emily Scherb, PT, DPT, and Dawn Muci, DPT, SCS, ATC, co-authors of the PASIG Independent Study Course (ISC) *Clinical Management of Circus Artists*. Together, they explore physical therapy care for circus artists through the lens of orthopedics, performance demands, and patient individuality in a panel discussion led by the PASIG VP-Education Melissa Strzelinski. If you missed the panel, you can listen to the recording, which has been posted to the APTA Orthopedics You Tube Channel. [[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5IHHTIGU\\_yw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5IHHTIGU_yw)]



Learn How to Assess and Treat Hypermobility in Circus and Performing Artists

We also encourage you to check out our ISC: *Clinical Management of Circus Artists*

The Circus Arts Independent Study Course can be found on the APTA Orthopedics website: <https://www.orthopt.org/content/education/independent-study-courses>



## PASIG WEBINAR TOPICS FOR 2025

Stay tuned for information about upcoming PASIG Webinar programming. Late summer 2025, PASIG member, Mike Costello, has offered to deliver a talk on Neuropathic pain considerations for musicians. In the fall, we would like to host a webinar on complex case management featuring PA fellows. We also plan on offering student focused programming on mentoring, networking, and performing arts career pathways.

## ATTENTION ALL PASIG STUDENTS: WOULD YOU LIKE \$500 FOR YOUR RESEARCH?

*The first step is to submit an abstract to CSM 2026!*  
Submission deadline: **July 15, 2025.**

<https://csm.apta.org/programming/csm-submissions>

Student members of PASIG who have their abstract accepted for CSM 2026 are invited to apply for a scholarship for CSM 2026. The topic must be related to performing arts and physical therapy to be considered for the scholarship.

The accepted abstract could be a platform or poster presentation. Once your abstract is accepted, you are welcome to apply for the scholarship. Note: you must show proof of your abstract acceptance to CSM 2026, and plan to attend CSM 2026 in Anaheim, CA.

#### **Not a PASIG Member?**

Joining is easy! PASIG membership is free to APTA Orthopedics Members. Simply click [here](#) to join.

#### **Eligibility:**

1. Must be a DPT student in an accredited physical therapy program, or a fellow in an accredited physical therapy fellowship program when the research was conducted (not necessary to be a student or fellow when research is presented).
2. Abstract has been accepted to CSM.
3. Must plan to attend CSM.
4. Must be listed as an author on the presentation.
5. Must participate in presenting the poster/platform at CSM.

#### **Deadline: November 30th.**

#### **Criteria for selection:**

1. The importance of the contribution of the abstract to the physical therapy management of performing arts physical therapy.
2. The clinical implications derived or suggested from the abstract.
3. The quality of the writing.
4. The clarity of the clinical information/data presented.

#### **Notification of the Award:**

The recipient of the award will be notified in January (just prior to CSM for which the scholarship is being offered) by the PASIG Scholarship Chairperson, Anna Saunders [[annarosemary@gmail.com](mailto:annarosemary@gmail.com)].

## **PASIG VOLUNTEERS / LEADERS NEEDED**

The strength of APTA Orthopedics Performing Arts is the members that make up our group. We are always interested in hearing from our members that would like to become more engaged. If you are interested in leading an educational session, workshop, podcast, or serve on a panel, contact our VP-Education, Melissa Strzelinski [ [melissastrzel@gmail.com](mailto:melissastrzel@gmail.com) ]. If you would like to contribute to a PASIG citation blast, contact our Research Chair, Michael Tsang [ [kinghontsang@hotmail.com](mailto:kinghontsang@hotmail.com) ]. If you want to help promote membership and engagement in PASIG, contact Jessica Rancour [ [jrancour@pt.usc.edu](mailto:jrancour@pt.usc.edu) ]. If you want to get involved with the Screening Committee, contact Marisa Hentis [ [marisa.giangrasso@gmail.com](mailto:marisa.giangrasso@gmail.com) ]. If you have questions about performing arts fellowships, contact Tiffany Marulli [ [tiffany.marulli@osumc.edu](mailto:tiffany.marulli@osumc.edu) ]. If you are interested in being featured in one of our PASIG spotlights, contact our Outreach Chair, Danielle Farzanegan [ [dfarzanegan@gmail.com](mailto:dfarzanegan@gmail.com) ]. If you have questions about Athletes and the Arts (AATA), Janice Ying is serving as the PASIG liaison, in addition to serving as the PASIG Secretary [ [janice@opuspt.com](mailto:janice@opuspt.com) ].

If you are interested in a leadership position within the PASIG (This is my last year as PASIG President), contact one of the members of our Nominating Committee: Samantha Harmon [ [samanthajharmon@gmail.com](mailto:samanthajharmon@gmail.com) ], Amy Humphrey [ [ahumphrey@messiah.edu](mailto:ahumphrey@messiah.edu) ], or Alyssa Arms [ [alyssa.arms@backinsteppt.com](mailto:alyssa.arms@backinsteppt.com) ]. The election process typically begins in late summer.

## **STAY ENGAGED**

We have a PASIG Facebook community that includes 467 of our members. This is a closed group where members seek advice, post research articles and practice guidelines, and post service and job opportunities. You must be a member of APTA Orthopedics- Performing Arts to join. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1546315278934871>

## **SPOTLIGHT YOUR UNIVERSITY OR RESIDENCY/FELLOWSHIP**

**Showcase your university or residency-fellowship with an exciting opportunity for you and your students to publish in *Orthopaedic Physical Therapy Practice* (OPTP), the APTA Ortho's clinical magazine. Here is how it would work:**

- **Contact the APTA Orthopaedic** to express interest (limited to 1 university issue per year)
- **Coordinate scholarly projects** with your students (ideally, you have scholarly projects that are close to completion)
- **Internally vet articles** internally with university professors to select your best work
- **Submit the top 5-6 articles** showcasing your students to OPTP Managing Editor, Sharon Klinski at [sklinski@orthopt.org](mailto:sklinski@orthopt.org)