

## Imaging News & Updates

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### Joint Effort by APTA, AIUM and Inteleos

In recent months, you may have heard of a developing 3-way relationship between the APTA, the American Institute for Ultrasound in Medicine (AIUM), and Inteleos. If you are unfamiliar with these organizations, AIUM is a multidisciplinary organization that recognizes physical therapists as among those professionals capable of achieving expertise in ultrasound. The AIUM is self-described as "...dedicated to advancing its mission by providing education, fostering best practices, and facilitating research" relating to the use of ultrasound. Inteleos is the main organization containing the American Registry for Diagnostic Medical Sonography® (ARDMS®) and the Alliance for Physician Certification & Advancement™ (APCA™). Of particular interest to physical therapists, Inteleos offers the individual credential of Registered in Musculoskeletal Sonography or perhaps better known as the RMSK®, which is a prestigious individual credential indicating a very high level of educational achievement and performance using ultrasound. At present, approximately 30 physical therapists are among those who have earned the RMSK. These organizations have been working together in recent years to establish joint benefit to all 3 entities with the Imaging SIG being a significant contributor to facilitating this effort. In particular, the goal is to establish a pathway for physical therapists to be educated in the use of ultrasound in a structured and comprehensive approach such that qualification for the RMSK credential is more attainable.

In August 2020, the 3 organizations agreed on language to describe their combined efforts:

"The American Physical Therapy Association (APTA), the American Institute of Ultrasound in Medicine (AIUM) and Inteleos are committed to a collaborative effort to support the education, performance, certification, and accreditation of physical therapists and their practices in the field of musculoskeletal ultrasound. The creation of a structured pathway of education and training will provide physical therapists with quality opportunities to advance their proficiency, and successful completion of the pathway can result in the earning of the Registered in Musculoskeletal® (RMSK®) sonography certification, and improving their practice's eligibility for AIUM Practice Accreditation. The combined effort of APTA, AIUM and Inteleos will help bridge the gap for physical therapists on their pursuit of individual competency and practice accreditation."

The APTA Executive Vice President, Bill Boissonnault commented, "This statement reflects the next step in a collaborative effort that dates back to 2017. The organizations are committed to promoting quality musculoskeletal ultrasound education and training for physical therapists. Establishment of a structured pathway in musculoskeletal ultrasound will hopefully lead to similar efforts in other physical therapist practice areas."

Glynis V. Harvey, Chief Executive Officer of AIUM, states,

"This alignment of resources provides the practitioner with the proficiency tools to perform safe, effective, and affordable medical imaging that improves patient care."

"Inteleos is pleased to partner with AIUM and APTA to better serve the physical therapy community and enable providers to receive an independent validation of their knowledge, skills and abilities" says Dale Cyr, Chief Executive Officer of Inteleos.

Unfortunately, all "hands-on" ultrasound education has effectively ceased because of COVID-19 transmission concerns. Our hope is, however, that once safety allows a return of direct ultrasound training, physical therapy education in ultrasound can be facilitated more easily than in the past in preparation for earning the RMSK. Further announcements of the educational tracks available for physical therapists will be forthcoming. We plan to have information on the AOPT website Imaging SIG pages, in addition to directly linking relevant information provided by AIUM and Inteleos. The goal of the Imaging SIG is to encourage physical therapists to be in an accessible and achievable curriculum toward preparation to earn the RMSK. Our overall goal of imaging referral being within the scope of physical therapist practice will be supported by more physical therapists having earned the RMSK. Additionally, advocacy and reimbursement efforts will be aided by greater strength in the numbers of qualified physical therapists in ultrasound imaging.

### Combined Sections Meeting 2021—Virtual Conference

We will be adapting Imaging SIG activities to the virtual format required for CSM. More information will be forthcoming on all aspects of this. Described here are what we are confident we can adapt, but with some details pending.

The Imaging SIG educational session has an approach of pairing advocacy and evidence. The number of jurisdictions in which physical therapists now have imaging referral privileges continues to gradually grow. Evidence of prudent and appropriate use of imaging referral by physical therapists is likewise accumulating. As such, we have an opportunity to present this evidence and combine that with descriptions of the efforts within these states of their legislative efforts. Opposition to physical therapist referral privileges for imaging usually adheres to the excessive cost and overuse themes although those are not supported by the evidence. This session will offer contradictory and current evidence to those notions. The combination of this evidence and the narratives of the state leaders involved will help offer preparation to those in jurisdictions considering initiatives for imaging referral privileges. Please encourage your state leaders to participate in this session.

The educational session is entitled "Advances in Imaging Referral: Generating a New Pulse in Autonomous Physical Therapist Practice" and will include presentations by Aaron Keil, PT, DPT, OCS; Evan Nelson PT, DPT, PhD; Stephen Kareha, PT, DPT, ATC, PhD; Kip Schick PT, DPT, MBA; and Michelle Collie, PT, DPT and will be moderated by Imaging SIG Vice President, Marie Corkery, PT, DPT, MHS.

We also hope to have a manuscript of this session evolve as an advocacy tool available for jurisdictions seeking legislative initiatives for imaging referral. Perhaps with the combined efforts of the presenters and APTA central staff, we can produce a document that state leaders may find helpful.

If you have a presentation accepted for CSM, regardless of format, please let the Imaging SIG know so that any and all sessions relating to imaging can be promoted and SIG members encouraged to attend virtually.

Similarly, if you have a presentation accepted and would like to apply for the Imaging SIG Scholarship or if you know of someone who may be deserving, please investigate applying for that scholarship at <https://www.orthopt.org/content/special-interest-groups/imaging/imaging-sig-scholarship>. The deadline for applications is November 1. This will be the 4th year for the scholarship, which was established to encourage and support physical therapy research in imaging.

We are likely to have an Imaging SIG member meeting at some point during the duration of CSM, but the details of this are unknown at the time of this writing. More details will be coming.

### Elections 2020

By the time you receive this (circa October), the Imaging SIG elections will be upon us. During November, Imaging SIG members will be voting on candidates for Vice President and the Nominating Committee. Both of these are 3-year terms. The newly elected individuals will assume office immediately after Combined Sections Meeting following the election.

The Vice President serves in the role of Education Chair. While including responsibilities oriented toward programming at CSM and other conferences, the Vice President is also in charge of other educational initiatives within the SIG and with outreach.

The Nominating Committee position is a rotating 3-year term with the last year of the term being committee chairperson. This is a great opportunity for someone seeking a greater role in the SIG in the future.

In November 2021, elections will be held for President and Nominating Committee.

### Clinical Practice Guideline Input Methodology Established

As a product of meetings held at CSM in Denver in February 2020, the Imaging SIG has begun to offer input on diagnostic imaging procedures for the AOPT's clinical practice guideline (CPG) development. Content experts will offer input related to imaging in the early stages of CPG formulation and then again at the review stage. The overarching goal here is to assure there is consistent mention of imaging in the diagnostic process where indicated. Much of this focus on when imaging is particularly relevant in the diagnostic process is as suggested by the American College of Radiology Appropriateness Criteria. This input to the CPGs is being coordinated by Jim Dauber who serves as the liaison between the Imaging SIG and the AOPT Practice Committee.

### Strategic Plan Updates

As of this writing, the new strategic plan for the Imaging Special Interest Group will be published and available on the AOPT's website, SIG pages. This new strategic plan was developed by members throughout summer and was initiated to be consistent with AOPT's new strategic plan. First, volunteers were solicited from among the SIG members by mass email. Then an "idea development" phase occurred as those volunteers provided input for proposed SIG initiatives. The initiatives were then prioritized by the members and the language of the final items was adjusted for consistency. The overall approach in the development of this strategic plan was to establish goals that were more within short-term reach and could be determined as accomplished or steps toward accomplishment were made.

### Education Initiatives

We anticipate development of a major new set of education initiatives shortly for imaging. With advances in AOPT's web-based platform, greater potential now exists for the development and distribution of educational materials for imaging. Stay tuned as more information will be forthcoming.

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