



**AOPT SIG**

ACADEMY OF ORTHOPAEDIC PHYSICAL THERAPY, APTA

**OCCUPATIONAL  
HEALTH**

OHSIG Q1 Newsletter  
March 2019

Respectfully Submitted by  
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### **CSM 2019 Recap**

OHSIG Membership Meeting was held on Saturday, January 26<sup>th</sup> immediately preceding the OHSIG sponsored educational session. To promote our OHSIG at CSM events, we distributed high glow visibility vests for the OHSIG officers and other members to wear that was branded with the Academy of Orthopedic Physical Therapy and Occupational Health SIG identity. We received many comments from attendees. The vests allowed non-members to readily identify OHSIG members which encouraged discussions about our group and/or specific issues in occupational health. Stanley Paris commented to a member at a CSM event that our spirit wear made him think about the protesters in Paris.

OHSIG provided an update for our membership which included the following:



Lorena Pettet Payne, outgoing OHSIG President, and Lori Deal, outgoing Nominating Committee Chair and Member at CSM 2019 Washington, D.C.

Outgoing President, Lorena Pettet Payne, was recognized for her work as President of the OHSIG for the last 6 years. Thank you Lorena for your hard work and dedication. Lorena will remain involved with our group acting as our liaison with OSHA and assisting with developing the occupational health curriculum.

Lori Deal was also recognized for her service as a Member and Chairperson of the Nominating Committee. Lori assisted with development of the Work Rehab CPG and has worked diligently in assuring our SIG board continues to engage leaders to advance our OHSIG strategic plan. Thank you Lori for your commitment to the group.

Wanda Evans, APTA Senior Payment Specialist and OHSIG liaison, reported on trends in Worker's compensation. Since the Workers' Compensation Benchmarking Study launched in 2013, claims leaders have consistently ranked medical management as the core competency most critical to claim outcomes. With medical costs representing more than 60 percent of claims costs in many jurisdictions, the study's Advisory Council recommended the 2018 study further investigate how high performing claims payers are surmounting this top industry challenge.

Some "hot" areas of interest to payers identified in this benchmarking study include:

- Focusing on a Triple Aim model to improve claim outcomes
- Employing a medical concierge model and moving away from discount methodologies
- Integrating behavioral health into programs
- Using predictive and prescriptive modeling to effectively manage treatment and interventions
- Enabling employee self-reporting
- Leveraging technology to enhance employee resilience and recovery
- Incorporating employee wellness and patient-centered outcomes
- Enhancing employer education around employee advocacy and communication
- Utilizing universal provider scorecards and publishing results
- Measuring provider outcomes by using existing benchmarking data and tools more effectively
- Leveraging value-based payment and Accountable Care Organization models.

Caroline Furtak, Co-Chair of the Communications Committee, introduced the mentoring program and solicited volunteers for the 6-month program. The launch date is now set for April 15<sup>th</sup>. Please look for additional information via an email from the Academy of Orthopaedic Physical Therapy or follow:

[https://www.orthopt.org/uploads/content\\_files/files/OHSIG%20mentoring%20program\\_FINAL%202-28-19.pdf](https://www.orthopt.org/uploads/content_files/files/OHSIG%20mentoring%20program_FINAL%202-28-19.pdf)

Following the member meeting the OHSIG sponsored program was presented:

### **Thinking Outside the Box: Improving Worker Health With Ergonomics**

Speakers: Frances Kistner, PT, PhD

Chris Studebaker, PT, DPT, Board-Certified Orthopaedic Clinical Specialist

Co-author: Katie McBee, PT, DPT, Board-Certified Orthopaedic Clinical Specialist



Our OHSIG sponsored programming was well received by APTA CSM attendees. There were over 150 people in attendance at the Saturday morning session. Our presenters did a fantastic job discussing ergonomic processes and individualized ergonomic interventions. Practical individualized ergonomic applications were demonstrated. A healthy conversation about ergonomics and early symptom intervention programs and education ensued.

### **Introducing the new OHSIG President**

**Dr. Rick Wickstrom, PT, DPT, CPE**



Dr. Rick Wickstrom is a Doctor of Physical Therapy, Certified Professional Ergonomist, Certified Disability Management Specialist and Certified Health Coach. He earned his bachelor's degree in Physical Therapy from the Ohio State University, completed graduate coursework in Occupational Ergonomics at the University of Cincinnati, and obtained his doctoral degree in Physical Therapy from Alabama State University. Dr. Wickstrom has consulted in occupational health and ergonomics for over 30 years. He has published many articles and technical papers related to functional capacity evaluation, work disability prevention and ergonomics. He regularly testifies as an expert on matters concerning physical disability, fitness-for-duty, and job accommodation.

His diverse clinical practice includes transitional work-site therapy, functional capacity evaluation, worker accommodation studies, ergonomic job analysis, development of worker fitness screening and transitional work programs, software development, research, and training. Dr. Wickstrom has dedicated his career to preparing occupational health professionals with skills and tools needed to assess job demands, evaluate worker fitness-for-duty, resolve worker performance barriers, and promote healthy activity.

#### **OSHG members and APTA staff meet with OSHA**

The OSHG and APTA had a second meeting with OSHA in February at United States Department of Labor in Washington, DC. OSHG members Lorena Pettet Payne, Curt DeWeese, and Drew Bossen were supported by APTA staff Wanda Evans, Kara Gainer, and Justin Elliott to have a continuing dialogue about the role of physical therapy in injury prevention and early intervention. After the October meeting with OSHA, APTA officially become a supporter of OSHA's Safe and Sound Campaign. The APTA logo is posted under "Campaign Supporters". APTA also has posted this information to our coalition's webpage and the PTs working with Employers webpage:

<http://www.apta.org/Coalitions/>

<http://www.apta.org/Payment/Billing/WorkingWithEmployers/>

#### **Current Concepts Subcommittee updates**

All released concepts and guidelines can be found on our OSHG webpage:

<https://www.orthopt.org/content/special-interest-groups/occupational-health/current-concepts-in-occ-health>

**\*\*Advanced Work Rehabilitation CPG** This was sent back by Academy of Orthopaedic Physical Therapy CPG development group for a wider scope review of the literature. Our current submission reviewed research from/with physical therapy; however, the review board determined it would be more appropriate to include additional disciplines in the research review. The literature review is underway with hopes of being completed by June 2019.

**\*\*Management of the Acutely Injured Worker.** Scheduled for release in the next *OPTP* edition!!

***The Role of the Physical Therapist in Occupational Health:*** Lorena Pettet, past OSHG President, will be leading this update, which is intended to provide curriculum information for PT Programs.

***Legal and Risk Management*** currently seeking a task force leader and work group members (If you are interested in participating in this group please contact one of our board members.)

## **Scheduled Webinars for 2019**

**Exoskeletons-** During the second quarter 2019, we are planning to offer a presentation on the types of exoskeletons available and current research involving the use of these devices for the working population and in rehabilitation. An email will be sent out with additional information on date and forum when determined.

The OHSIG is also interested in providing a second professional development opportunity in the latter half of 2019. If anyone is interested in a particular topic or has a particular area of expertise to share, please reach out to one of our board members to further discuss. We will also be looking for help with an article for the next quarter edition of *OPTP*.

## **NIOSH amends Research Agenda for Healthcare and Social Assistance to include OHSIG recommendations:**

In August 2018, APTA submitted comments to NIOSH responding to its draft National Occupational Research Agenda for Healthcare and Social Assistance. Kara R. Gainer, JD, APTA Director of Regulatory Affairs, worked with the OHSIG in reviewing and commenting on the draft research agenda. NIOSH published its final research agenda in February, 2019. All comments received were reviewed and addressed where appropriate. NIOSH specifically modified the research agenda to heed the OHSIG recommendations. The full report is here:

[https://www.cdc.gov/nora/councils/hcsa/pdfs/National\\_Occpational\\_Agenda\\_for\\_HCSA\\_February\\_2019-508.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/nora/councils/hcsa/pdfs/National_Occpational_Agenda_for_HCSA_February_2019-508.pdf)

NIOSH made a number of edits to this agenda to align with the APTA OHSIG recommendations. For example, on Page 20: Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation (under Safe Patient Handling): Research is needed to study the use of safe patient handling and mobility equipment to address the unique challenges faced by physical therapy personnel across the diverse range of settings where they provide rehabilitation services. On page 49, the Research agenda cites one of our Current Concepts documents: Murphy B, Deal L, Furtak C, Studebaker C, Koehler M [2017]. Current concepts in occupational health: work-related injury/illness prevention and ergonomics guidelines. La Crosse, WI: Academy of Orthopaedic Physical Therapy,

[https://www.orthopt.org/uploads/content\\_files/files/OHSIG%20PREVENTION%20AND%20ERGONOMICS%202017.pdf](https://www.orthopt.org/uploads/content_files/files/OHSIG%20PREVENTION%20AND%20ERGONOMICS%202017.pdf)

**Facebook conversations:** Join the conversation: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1710349545861376/>

Here are just a few of the topics covered over the last 3 months:

U.S. Department of Labor Issues Final Rule to Protect Privacy of Workers

Link to the ruling:

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USDOL/bulletins/22a6fcb?fbclid=IwAR2ytuqdiLVATkq9ym4KFxWmyXLvjgChyM3m6vZ9PmWdmqoJ4WWw1PdbgyC>

The addition of FCE data significantly increased the mean DOT physical work capacity provided by physicians for veterans with chronic pain.

[https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/27780768?fbclid=IwAR0AEDKE\\_bXempeNLnMJYonQ-KTjXRHsG721t5VPToKDB4rUojeJdoHrno](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/27780768?fbclid=IwAR0AEDKE_bXempeNLnMJYonQ-KTjXRHsG721t5VPToKDB4rUojeJdoHrno)

Early Physical Therapy Reduces Opioid Use

[https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2718095?fbclid=IwAR0OGjAeltipvcfGK\\_R-3KUzEqRuc\\_osbxWyiyB5D4xZ5BYBmSZP17TTtYc](https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2718095?fbclid=IwAR0OGjAeltipvcfGK_R-3KUzEqRuc_osbxWyiyB5D4xZ5BYBmSZP17TTtYc)

The state of Ohio passed legislation at the end of 2018 that clarifies physical therapy scope of practice includes a physical therapy diagnosis. This legislative change better positions physical therapy professionals in Ohio for primary care and consultation with injured workers that report musculoskeletal disorders.

Nonfatal Injuries to Firefighters Treated in U.S. Emergency Departments, 2003–2014

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0749379718319135?via%3Dihub&fbclid=IwAR2bnq2lp66ic1txEZCDGe2G3DUDpk0ECeao4DzCFF1-MMoR45-XUtKLboc>