



APTA South Carolina 2026 Annual Conference
March 27th-28th, 2026
University Center of Greenville – Greenville, SC

Course Descriptions

Friday March 27th, 2026 – 12:00 – 1:00 pm

Course Title: Team Based Care for Adolescents with Pelvic Floor Disorders

Speaker: Sarah Pate, PT, DPT

Description: This session introduces physical therapists to the unique considerations of pelvic floor health in adolescents and teenagers, with a focus on bowel and bladder dysfunction. While pelvic health is often associated with adult populations, many young patients experience issues such as constipation, fecal soiling, urinary incontinence, urgency, and voiding dysfunction that directly impact quality of life, participation in school, and self-esteem. Physical therapists play a vital role in identifying pelvic floor dysfunction, understanding its connection to musculoskeletal, postural, and behavioral factors, and integrating treatment within a developmentally appropriate framework. The presentation will review pelvic floor anatomy and function, common patterns of dysfunction in youth, and the influence of growth, puberty, and psychosocial factors on symptoms and outcomes. Evidence-based assessment strategies and treatment approaches—including education, exercise, biofeedback, lifestyle modifications, and coordination with interdisciplinary care—will be highlighted. Emphasis will be placed on creating a supportive therapeutic environment that fosters trust, autonomy, and age-appropriate communication

Course Title: From Questions to Clarity: The Subjective Exam as a Clinical Guide

Speakers: Mareli Klopper, PT, DPT, DSc, OSC, FAAOMPT and Grant Banks, PT, DPT, OSC, FAAOMPT

Description: We've all seen clinicians who seem to build rapport with patients almost instantly during the subjective examination. They ask the right questions, follow up with clarifying comments that keep the conversation focused, and avoid getting sidetracked by irrelevant details. By the end, they've already generated a meaningful list of hypotheses to guide their objective examination. In contrast, we've also witnessed subjective exams that feel impersonal, scripted, and so general that they fail to provide clear direction for the rest of the evaluation. What makes the difference? And more importantly, how do we grow into the first type of clinician rather than settling for the second?

The subjective examination is often undervalued, yet it is one of our most powerful tools for guiding clinical reasoning, shaping the objective examination, and fostering a strong therapeutic alliance. This interactive session will explore the depth and utility of a skilled subjective interview. Case examples will illustrate how thoughtful questioning and strategic follow-ups can clarify diagnostic hypotheses, enhance patient trust, and improve objective examination and treatment direction. Participants will engage in practical exercises and role-play to refine their interviewing skills and leave with concrete strategies for conducting more meaningful and clinically impactful subjective exams.

Course Title: Seeing the Full Spectrum: Educating Physical Therapists Across Skin Tones

Speaker: Megan Mobley, PT, DPT, Board-Certified in Wound Management Physical Therapy

Description: Physical therapy education currently focuses on teaching across the lifespan and the continuum of care, but we also need to consider teaching across a spectrum of skin tones. The integumentary system, which includes the skin, hair, nails, and associated glands, is a vital component of human health. It plays an essential role in protecting the body, regulating temperature, and enabling sensory perception. For physical therapists, understanding the intricacies of the integumentary system is crucial, not only for patient care but also for identifying and managing skin-related issues, particularly in diverse patient populations. Given that skin appearance, texture, and condition vary across individuals of different skin tones, it is vital to incorporate these variations into physical therapy education. This approach ensures that future clinicians can provide culturally competent and effective care for all patients, regardless of their skin tone.

The objective of this educational session is to promote awareness and equip clinicians as well as academicians with a comprehensive understanding of how skin structure, function, and pathology present on dark skin tones as well as practical ways of incorporating teaching across a spectrum of skin tones in physical therapy curriculum. By enhancing awareness and knowledge in these areas, this session aims to foster an inclusive, evidence-based approach to patient care and teaching that addresses the unique needs of individuals with dark skin tones.

Course Title: Technology Solutions for Billing and Collection Efficiency

Speaker: Jim Stoker, PT, DPT, MA, SCS Emeritus

Description: Learn how evolving technology can increase payment, speed payment, reduce denials and create operational efficiencies. An in-depth explanation of the steps of and life cycle of a physical therapy insurance claim and the evolving technological platforms that support billing and collection efficiency. We will walk through the life cycle of a claim from verification of benefits to depositing the money into the bank and discuss developing technology advancements that are enhancing the speed and efficiency of billing and collections and how your organization may benefit from these advancements.

Friday March 27th, 2026 – 1:15-3:15 pm

Course Title: Pediatric Standardized Assessments (PDMS-3 and BOT-3)

Speaker: Bethany Early, PT, DPT, PCS

Description: This 2-hour session will begin with a brief discussion on the differences between the second and third editions of the Peabody Developmental Motor Scales and Bruininks-Oseretsky Test of Motor Proficiency standardized assessments followed by a hands-on opportunity to practice administration of either assessment with children. Age-appropriate pediatric volunteers will be available for attendees to practice in groups the administration and online scoring formats of either assessment tool.

Course Title: Introduction to Pain Neuroscience

Speaker: Mark A. Clark, MSPT, Cert DN, USAW-1, TPI-1

Description: Introduction to Pain Neuroscience Education could also be called: Awesome Neuro Information for all Physical Therapists. This presentation will provide therapists with the groundwork on helping patients to understand how pain works. Topics will include the history of pain, the biology of pain, and evidence-based research on treatment of patients with chronic pain. Presentation format will include didactic information combined with some case examples to help therapists understand the complexity of pain.

Course Title: Scoliosis Across the Lifespan and Settings for Non-Schroth PTs and PTAs

Speaker: Jennifer Warren, PT, DPT

Description: Scoliosis is a complex spinal condition characterized by an atypical curvature of the spine. It impacts millions of people, crosses all ages, and will be encountered in all physical therapy practice settings. This foundational section aims to provide a thorough overview of scoliosis, focusing on the different types, their prevalences, and the underlying etiologies. Additionally, we will explore the risks associated with the progression of idiopathic scoliosis and review comprehensive scoliosis screening procedures, which will include a practical lab opportunity for PTs and PTAs who are NOT PSSE/Schroth certified.

Course Title: Code, Care, and Commerce: Reimagining Physical Therapy for the Digital Age

Speaker: Alex Bendersky PT, DPT

Description: This two-hour course offers a comprehensive examination of how digital transformation is reshaping physical therapy practice, using the "Code, Care, and Commerce" framework. The course moves beyond technology as an accessory, positioning it instead as the central driver for clinical efficacy, authentic patient engagement, and sustainable business operations within allied health.

This field of physical therapy is grappling with significant challenges, including severe staffing shortages, ongoing declines in reimbursement rates, and persistent barriers to patient access. This course provides strategic insights and practical solutions. Participants will learn to critically assess and implement digital technologies that offer transformative pathways to quantifiable improvements in patient outcomes, ruthless operational efficiency, and long-term financial stability.

Course Title: Best Foot Forward: Clinical Reasoning in Prosthetic Rehabilitation

Speaker: Sarah Elder, PT, DPT, NCS; Michelle M. Lusardi, PT, DPT, PhD, FAPTA

Description: South Carolina ranks 6th nationally in diabetes prevalence, with 1 in 4 older adults carrying this diagnosis. When coupled with peripheral arterial disease and smoking history, amputation risk multiplies significantly. Many individuals facing limb loss cope with complex bio-psychosocial challenges that profoundly impact rehabilitation outcomes. Physical therapists play a critical role in post-operative pre-prosthetic care and prosthetic rehabilitation. This case-based presentation follows an adult patient navigating her prosthetic journey while managing multiple co-morbidities. Attendees will actively participate in clinical decision-making throughout her pre-prosthetic and prosthetic rehabilitation phases, exploring essential concepts including prosthetic design and alignment, gait analysis, and evidence-based treatment strategies.

Participants will learn to adjust the plan of care to address the patient's specific bio-psychosocial needs, gaining practical skills in delivering comprehensive, patient-centered care for individuals with lower extremity limb loss. This interactive session equips therapists with the knowledge and clinical reasoning necessary to optimize outcomes for this complex patient population in various clinical settings.

Friday March 27th, 2026 – 3:45 – 5:45 pm

Course Title: Zebras not Horses: An Interactive Session on Clinical Reasoning Around Complex Outpatient Cases

Speaker: Jacqueline Davenport, PT, DPT, OCS; Chase Parks, PT, DPT, OCS

Description: This interactive breakout session, Zebras Not Horses: Clinical Reasoning in Complex Outpatient Cases, is designed for students and early-career clinicians who want to sharpen their diagnostic and decision-making skills. Using the Finucane 2020 red flag spinal pathology framework as a foundation, participants will work through 2–3 real-world cases from outpatient physical therapy practice that required advanced reasoning beyond typical “horse” presentations. With interactive discussion and polling, attendees will practice applying anatomy, prevalence of disease, diagnostic imaging considerations, and patient examination skills to determine whether to treat, modify care, or refer for further evaluation. The session emphasizes active participation, peer-to-peer learning, and reflection on clinical reasoning strategies. By the end of the workshop, participants will leave with a structured approach to recognizing red flags, greater confidence in managing complex outpatient presentations, and practical tools for strengthening their own reasoning processes in daily practice.

Course Title: Seeing Clearly: A Practical Guide to Vision in Physical Therapy

Speaker: Hannah Bramblett, PT, DPT, Board Certified in Neurologic Physical Therapy

Description: This session will begin with a lecture-based review of the visual system, including key anatomical structures, components, and visual pathways. Both neurological and structural visual impairments will be discussed, with attention to prevalence, risk factors, and clinical implications.

Following this foundational overview, participants will engage in a guided exploration of visual screening and testing procedures. Step-by-step instruction will be provided for each measurement, with dedicated time allotted for hands-on practice of select assessments. Additional testing content will be supplemented through detailed handouts. Red flags and special considerations during testing will be highlighted to promote safe and effective clinical decision-making.

Case scenarios representing a variety of visual impairments commonly encountered in rehabilitation settings will be incorporated to facilitate clinical reasoning and application of learned skills. Participants will discuss test selection, interpretation of results, and implications for treatment planning.

After a brief break, the session will transition to treatment strategies, emphasizing a continuum of care from early-stage, low-level interventions to more advanced, progressive approaches. The presentation will conclude with a 15-minute Q&A segment, allowing time for discussion, clarification, and integration of key concepts.

Course Title: Leading Forward: Cultivating Transformative Leaders in Physical Therapy

Speaker: Lisa K. Saladin, PT, PhD, FAPTA; Sara V. Kraft, PT, DPT, NCS, ATP (EdD Candidate); Gretchen Seif, PT, DPT, OCS, FAAOMPT

Description: Leadership in physical therapy continues to evolve as clinicians, educators, and administrators respond to complex changes in health care, higher education, and professional identity. This interactive session features three leaders representing different stages and domains of leadership, executive academic administration, division leadership, and professional organization leadership. The panel will discuss how collaborative and reflective leadership, supported by mentorship, drives growth and innovation at both individual and organizational levels.

Drs. Lisa Saladin, Sara Kraft, and Gretchen Seif will share concise 'leadership lessons learned' on topics including cultivating resilience, navigating transition, and developing mentoring relationships. Participants will engage in guided reflection and small-group discussion to identify personal leadership strengths, barriers, and strategies for growth.

The session concludes with an individualized 'commitment to action' plan that supports leadership development across the continuum of practice and education.

Course Title: Harnessing Diagnostic Ultrasound: Shaping the Future of Physical Therapy Practice.

Speaker: Matthew de Ruig, PT, DPT, DHSc, OCS, CMTPT, Cert. MSK Ultrasonographer

Description: Join us for an insightful exploration into the evolving landscape of physical therapy with our presentation, "Harnessing Diagnostic Ultrasound: Shaping the Future of Physical Therapy Practice." As the field advances, diagnostic ultrasound stands out as a pivotal tool, offering unparalleled real-time visualization of musculoskeletal structures. This session will illuminate the diverse applications of ultrasound in physical therapy, from enhancing diagnostic accuracy to monitoring treatment progress with precision. Attendees will discover how ultrasound technology can be seamlessly integrated into practice, providing valuable biofeedback that empowers patients and fosters active participation in their rehabilitation. By understanding these developing trends, physical therapists can elevate patient care, ensuring their practice remains at the forefront of modern healthcare. Equip yourself with the knowledge and skills to leverage diagnostic ultrasound, transforming your approach to patient management and solidifying your role as a leader in the field. Whether you're new to ultrasound or looking to deepen your expertise, this presentation promises to enrich your professional journey and enhance your clinical outcomes.

Course Title: BARIatric Mobility: Beyond Ankle Pumps to Rehabbing Individuals of Size

Speaker: Jennifer Dewyea, PT and Noelle Sublett, PT, MS

Description: How many times have you entered a patient’s room, and your first thought was “Oh, boy! Where do I start?” This thought might occur for myriad reasons, one of which may be related to your patient’s size. What if you had the right knowledge, equipment, and confidence to make a positive impact on this patient’s health instead of feeling overwhelmed?

This interactive session will explore the importance of high-quality, safe, therapeutic mobilization for patients of size. We will discuss injuries to healthcare workers, safe patient handling and mobility equipment, mobility screening tools, exercises, and ways to provide seamless care, all as they relate to patients of size. The session will include a hands-on lab using a bariatric suit to simulate patients of size and how to safely mobilize these patients with specially designed equipment. The goals are for participants to gain awareness of how they can use what they already have and advocate for items they need to provide care that is safe for their patients and themselves.

Saturday March 28th, 2026 – 8:30 – 9:30 am

Course Title: Closing the Postpartum Gap: A Call for Interdisciplinary Care

Speaker: Phindile Erika Chowa, MD

Description: The postpartum period remains one of the most neglected phases of healthcare—often concluding abruptly at the six-week visit despite persistent functional, emotional, and musculoskeletal challenges. The problem became evident through both clinical observation and patient feedback, revealing that many postpartum women experience unaddressed pain, pelvic floor dysfunction, and fatigue due to fragmented follow-up and poor inter-professional collaboration.

This lecture examines the “postpartum gap” through a physician’s perspective and explores how coordinated care with physical therapists can transform maternal recovery. Using qualitative case analysis and review of emerging data on postpartum morbidity, I identify systemic barriers such as rigid scheduling structures, limited screening protocols, and the devaluation of maternal health within healthcare operations.

Challenges included institutional inertia and lack of communication channels between physicians and rehabilitation professionals. Outcomes achieved include improved awareness and the establishment of structured lactation and reintegration policies for clinicians in my own organization.

The session concludes with actionable recommendations: develop early referral pathways to pelvic floor therapy, create standardized postpartum screening checklists, and promote interprofessional education to foster communication between providers. Through collaboration, we can close the postpartum gap and ensure mothers recover not just physically, but wholly.

Course Title: Bridging Mechanistic Insights and Clinical Practice: Enhancing Patient Communication and Safety in Trigger Point Dry Needling

Speaker: Thomas Denninger, DPT, OCS, FAAOMPT; Gretchen Seif, PT, OCS, FAAOMPT

Description: Trigger point dry needling (TrP-DN) is a widely used intervention for managing myofascial pain and dysfunction, with growing evidence supporting both its biomechanical and neurophysiological effects. While much of the current literature explores mechanisms such as modulation of spinal reflexes, reduction of endplate noise, and changes in muscle viscoelastic properties, emerging perspectives emphasize the critical role of patient communication in maximizing therapeutic outcomes and ensuring safety. As with any invasive procedure, dry needling carries inherent risks—including bleeding, bruising, post-needling soreness, and, in rare cases, more serious complications like pneumothorax. Thus, patient education and clear, consistent communication are essential for promoting informed consent and setting realistic expectations.

Recent research has underscored the need for standardized, patient-friendly consent processes that include discussion of potential adverse events, especially as dry needling becomes more widely utilized across diverse clinical settings. Communication strategies that incorporate plain language, validate patient concerns, and explain both the mechanisms and goals of dry needling can enhance patient trust and engagement. Moreover, combining dry needling with educational interventions about posture, ergonomics, and self-care has been shown to improve patient-reported outcomes and satisfaction.

This session will synthesize the latest findings on the mechanisms of TrP-DN and explore how these insights should inform safety-oriented communication practices. Attendees will leave with a deeper understanding of how to translate complex physiological processes into clear, meaningful dialogue that supports both effective treatment and patient empowerment.

Course Title: Help! I'm a New Grad and Want an Outpatient Job

Speaker: Mark A. Clark, MSPT, Cert DN, USAW-1, TPI-1

Description: This presentation will help students and therapists understand some of the basics of getting a job in the outpatient setting. Interview techniques and strategies will be discussed to assist those interested in a new job. Participants will understand how to calculate their economic value in the outpatient setting and its relationship to the outpatient model. Credentialing and National Provider Identifier concepts will be introduced. Lastly, common things to be aware of while investigating multiple job opportunities will be reviewed to help improve the career awareness of new graduates.

Course Title: Transitioning Across the Continuum of Care to a Community-Based Setting

Speaker: Amanda Maddrey, OTR/L, RYT-200; Ryan Maddrey, PT, DPT, TPS

Description: Individuals with Spinal Cord Injuries (SCI) face many barriers to social participation and community engagement, which may impact their overall quality of life (QOL). Participation in physical activity, adaptive sports, yoga and community activities increase QOL in individuals with SCI. Additionally, access to comprehensive lifelong healthcare management is essential in maximizing QOL in persons with SCI.

This presentation will review a case study of an individual who has participated in therapy and recreation throughout the continuum of care with Prisma Health and Roger C. Peace including acute care therapy, inpatient rehabilitation, outpatient therapy and wellness services. The review quantifies the impact of participation in these activities on the individual's overall quality of life through subjective reports, progress along the continuum, goals met throughout therapy, and barriers faced.

Saturday March 28th, 2026 – 12:30-1:30 pm

Course Title: Lisa Saladin Lecture Series

Speaker: Robbie B. Leonard, PT, DPT

Saturday March 28th, 2026 – 2:00-4:00 pm

Course Title: The Headache of Headaches: Clinical Strategies for Classification and Management

Speaker: Jacqueline Davenport, PT, DPT, OCS; Chase Parks, PT, DPT, OCS

Description: Headache disorders are among the most frequent and function-limiting conditions seen in outpatient physical therapy practice, yet many clinicians report uncertainty in classification and targeted management. This presentation addresses that gap by providing a structured, evidence-based approach to differential diagnosis and intervention. Participants will learn to distinguish between tension-type, cervicogenic, and migraine headaches through clinical reasoning supported by subjective interviewing and key objective assessments such as the cervical flexion-rotation test, deep neck flexor endurance test, and vestibular screening. The session highlights the barriers of relying on pain reduction alone and emphasizes function-driven goals such as improving frequency, duration, and patient control of symptoms. Interventions are presented by headache category, including cervical endurance and mobility training, vestibular integration, and collaborative strategies for migraine management. Special

attention is given to psychosocial and systemic contributors—such as post-concussion symptoms, anxiety, and depression—that often complicate care.

Through interactive case examples, participants will gain strategies to translate current evidence into individualized treatment plans. The outcome is a clear framework for physical therapists to confidently evaluate, set functional goals, and implement effective interventions, ultimately improving long-term outcomes for patients with headache disorders.

Course Title: Applying the Movement Framework for Older Adults: Case Studies

Speaker: Kenneth L Miller, PT, DPT PhD; Michelle M. Lusardi PT DPT PhD FAPTA

Description: Many older adults come to physical therapy with complex, interactive physical, mental health/cognitive, and social situations that make effective care challenging. Members of the APTA Geriatrics Movement System Task Force will present a series of case studies, applying the Movement Framework for Older Adults (MFOA) developed to meet the complex bio-psychosocial needs and situations often encountered in geriatric rehabilitation. The model is innovative, evidence-based, and integrative; incorporating the APTA Patient-Client Management model, the International Classification of Function (ICF) and the Geriatric 5Ms (Mobility, Mind, Medication, Multi-complexity, and what Matters Most) in an algorithm to guide a comprehensive, patient centered plans of care. Guided by what Matters Most to the older adult discovered in an intake interview, observation of key mobility tasks (e.g. sit-to-stand, transfers, walking, and a patient-specific activity) guides selection of appropriate test/measures and identification of facilitators and barriers impacting prognosis in each of the 5M domains. This information supports development of patient-focused interventions integrating prevention, recovery, compensation, and referral to optimize physical therapy outcomes. The interactive patient cases will equip participants with practical tools enhance clinical decision making, promoting functional independence and improving impactful patient outcomes for older adults.

Course Title: Don't Just Walk It Off: PTs Training Patients to Speak Up for Their Health

Speaker: Amber Gadow PT, DPT, PCS; Kristen Vick PT, DPT, WCS

Description: This lecture will take the basics of advocacy to the next level so that attendees can begin to not only understand but lead local, regional, and national advocacy efforts. The presenters will share tips and resources to help empower others, including patients/clients and their families to become self-advocates. Attendees will learn how to educate stakeholders to advocate for themselves and to build powerful grassroots networks in their geographic region. By the end of this presentation, attendees will learn how to craft their own advocacy message related to their area of practice.

Saturday March 28th, 2026 – 4:15-5:15 pm

5x5 Presentations:

High Intensity Gait Training in a patient with motor incomplete spinal cord injury: a case study
Presenter: Anna Gibbs

Establishing normative data for strength in people with dementia using 30-Second Chair Stand Test, Five Times Sit to Stand, and hand grip dynamometry: A systematic review
Presenter: Nicole Decker, Torie Clark, Heather Thompson

The effects of extracorporeal shockwave therapy compared to other passive modalities on pain and self-reported foot function in individuals with chronic heel pain: a systematic review of randomized control trials
Presenter: Keith Waddell

The Use of Mobilization with Movement Exercises and Hip Strengthening in the Management of Moderate Bilateral Hip Osteo-Arthritis: A Case Report
Presenter: Brandon Townsend

Rehabilitation of Non-Arthritic Hip Pain: A Case Report
Presenter: Prentis Waters

Quadriceps Fatigability Across the Menstrual Cycle: A Comparison of the Luteal and Nonluteal Phases
Presenter: Bailee Rader, Amanda Lubkemann, Kassidy Detvan

Stable Joint, Unstable Beliefs: The Psychosocial Side of Knee Pain
Presenter: Catherine Harris, PT, DPT

Recurrent Lateral Ankle Instability
Presenter: Ryan Littlejohn

SC Joint Reconstruction: Bump in the Chest AND the Path to Graduation
Presenter: Amanda Ward