

APTA Washington Delegation Update: Spotlight on 2026 House Motions

As we move further into preparation for the 2026 APTA House of Delegates, our delegation is actively reviewing motions and beginning to form positions.

Rather than summarizing all 27 motions at once, we are highlighting a few that reflect the breadth of issues under APTA's **Strategic Framework (2026–2030)**:

- **Advancing our payment**
- **Empowering our members**
- **Evolving our practice**

These spotlights are intended to provide insight—and invite your perspective.

Advancing Our Payment

Improving Transparency of Financial Resources for PT and PTA Students

This motion focuses on improving access to clear, usable financial information about:

- Student debt
- Expected income
- The financial realities of entering the profession

While framed as transparency, it raises a broader issue:

👉 The relationship between the **cost of education** and the **financial sustainability of practice**

Reflection Question:

What responsibility does the profession have to ensure prospective students fully understand the financial realities of entering physical therapy?

Empowering Our Members

Policy on Physical Therapy Workforce Sustainability and Retention

This motion shifts the focus from workforce *planning* to workforce *sustainability*, emphasizing:

- Career longevity
- Work environment and well-being
- Shared responsibility across the profession

It reflects a growing recognition that:

👉 **Retention—not just recruitment—is central to the future of the profession**

Reflection Question:

What factors most influence your ability—or desire—to stay in the profession long term?

Evolving Our Practice

Amend: Diagnosis by Physical Therapists

This motion expands the definition of diagnosis to include:

- Impairments
- Activity limitations
- Participation restrictions

This more accurately reflects how physical therapists:

- Evaluate patients
- Develop plans of care
- Communicate clinical reasoning

👉 It represents a shift toward a more **function- and movement-based framework**

Reflection Question:

Should physical therapist diagnosis be grounded primarily in disease—or in functional and movement-based impact?

Where Pillars Intersect

Some motions span more than one strategic priority—highlighting how interconnected these issues are.

DPT Classification as a Professional Degree

(Empowering Our Members + Advancing Our Payment)

This motion responds to proposed federal changes that would classify the DPT as a **graduate** rather than **professional** degree—potentially lowering student loan caps.

It is intended to:

- Protect access to the profession
- Support workforce sustainability

- Reinforce the professional standing of physical therapists

Reflection Question:

What are the long-term implications if the DPT is not recognized as a professional degree at the federal level?

Expanding the Role of PTs in Prevention & Health Promotion

(Evolving Our Practice + Advancing Our Payment)

This motion strengthens the role of physical therapists in:

- Prevention
- Wellness
- Population health

It positions movement-based care as a **first-line strategy** for improving health outcomes.

👉 While this expands scope, it also raises important questions about how these services are supported and reimbursed.

Reflection Question:

If prevention is central to our role, what needs to change—policy, payment, or practice models—to make that sustainable?

Looking Ahead

These are just a few of the motions under consideration.

There are many others—addressing topics such as:

- Payment and payer behavior
- Scope of practice
- Professional identity and language
- Education and workforce

We will continue to highlight additional motions and themes in the months leading up to the House.

Key Dates in the House Process

As this is our first communication of the year, we want to highlight key milestones in the House of Delegates timeline:

- **May 8, 2026**
Final motion language distributed to members
- **Mid-June 2026**
Deadline for amendments and replacement motions
- **Late June 2026**
Amended and substitute motions distributed
- **July 10–13, 2026**
APTA Leadership Congress – Portland, Oregon
- **July 12–13, 2026**
In-person House of Delegates sessions

👉 These milestones mark the progression from **review** → **refinement** → **decision-making**

Your Voice Matters

We are now in the phase where positions are being formed.

We are particularly interested in hearing from members on the reflection questions above.

Your insight helps us:

- Identify what matters most in practice
- Anticipate downstream impact
- Represent Washington with clarity and alignment

If something in this update resonates—or raises concern—we welcome your perspective.

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Bottom line:

The House shapes the direction of the profession.
Your voice helps shape how we get there.

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APTA Washington Delegation