

President's Message

Francisco Maia, PT, DPT, CCRT

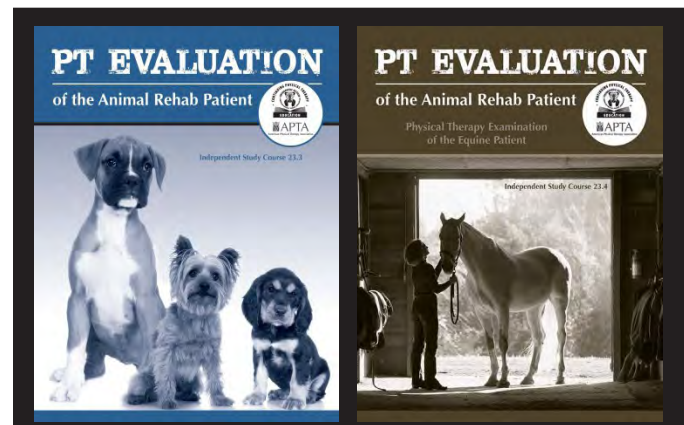
I am writing this letter almost one year to the date that I assumed the President's role for our SIG, leading into some reflection time into what we have accomplished so far and where we are headed. I knew I wanted to take a "divide and conquer" type of approach as there could be only so much that we could accomplish as President and Vice President, Jenny. Therefore, we set in motion the establishment of our 4 committees: legislation, membership, research, and communication. Thanks so much for those who have volunteered their time and efforts to these committees.

The Communication Committee got to work right away on expanding our exposure on social media and helping educate the public and the physical therapy profession on what we can do in the field of animal physical therapy. You likely have now seen 2-3 social media posts every month about our field, and we have been using #PT4Animals to help with our exposure as well. The membership team got to work on setting up and sending out a survey so we could learn more about our membership and, most importantly, how we can better help you. Thanks so much for those who filled out the survey. The results were shared in detail during our SIG meeting at CSM 2021, which can be accessed on our website. The Research Committee has now implemented a research article database, which is also available on our website for our members only. The goal is to add 2-3 new articles every month so, over a long period of time, we develop a robust database that would greatly benefit our members. Finally, the Legislation Committee took the role of updating our State Liaison list which was a few years old and needed to be updated prior to us moving forward with other projects. The goal is for every state to have a liaison within the SIG, and that person would be the point of contact for any inquiries from physical therapists, physical therapist assistants, and students regarding the field of animal physical therapy in that state. Furthermore, that person would help keep us up-to-date with any legislative changes and, over time, hopefully also take the initiative to lead the charge into changing the legislation where needed. If you are a member, then you should have received an email over the last month or so as we are looking to fill that role with some states. Please do not hesitate to contact me if this is something that interests you. I honestly believe this role can take a huge part in the long-term success and growth of our field as there is just so much that we can do at the national level, and most changes will need to happen at the state level. Even if your state already has a liaison, we can always add you as a co-liaison as this is a position that all the help we can get is needed.

In the meantime, if you missed our last quarter's newsletter with Kirk Peck's article about legislative updates, please make sure to find it and read it. That is by far the #1 question we get from those interested in the field of animal physical all over the United States. Unfortunately, this is still one of the main things holding some of you back from making a full transition from humans to animals. We will need numbers for us to make the impact in our field that I want us to make. Meaning, more and more physical therapists and physical therapist assistants joining our field and in return making

our voices louder. Therefore, my goal is to help make the pathway clearer for you to do so, but I (and the SIG in general) cannot do it alone. Join us and help us whichever way you can. We have had some great leaders in our field over the last 20+ years that forged the pathway for us, now it is time for a new generation of animal physical therapists to rise to the occasion.

*Thank you,
Francisco Maia, PT, DPT, CCRT
Animal PT SIG President
fmaia@othopt.org*



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