The mission of the Section on Geriatrics is to further our members' ability to provide best practice physical therapy and to advocate for optimal aging.

July 7, 2009

Dear Physical Therapist Educator,

The *Physical Therapists as Exercise Experts with Aging Adults Curriculum Guidelines* were developed to support the ongoing efforts in physical therapist education programs to provide appropriate, evidence-based instruction in examination and exercise interventions for aging adults. It has been the intent of our committee and the Section on Geriatrics to have physical therapist professional programs prepare their graduates to be recognized as experts in exercise, health promotion, fitness, and wellness for aging adults.

Clearly, all forms of exercise across the lifespan are within the scope of practice of physical therapists as reflected by their inclusion in *A Normative Model of Physical Therapist Professional Education,* the evaluative criteria of the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE), and the *Guide to Physical Therapist Practice*. The effectiveness of all types of exercise for aging adults is well documented in the literature. This is true for the healthy aging adult, as well as aging adults with cancer (colon, breast, prostate), cardiovascular disorders (congestive heart failure, hypertension, intermittent claudication, and stroke), endocrine disorders (diabetes), frailty, musculoskeletal disorders (osteoarthritis, low bone mass/osteoporosis, rheumatoid arthritis, total/partial joint replacements, urinary incontinence), risk of falls, neurological disorders (multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's disease), mental deterioration, obesity disorders, pulmonary disorders (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, asthma, adult cystic fibrosis), and organ transplants (heart, lung, renal).

It is our shared goal that all professional educational programs provide strong education based on sound evidence. The evidence supporting physical therapist utilization of functional examination and exercise interventions for aging adults underscores the necessity for our profession to be ready to clearly articulate and demonstrate its incorporation in our educational programs.

The enclosed *Physical Therapists as Exercise Experts with Aging Adults Curriculum Guidelines* provide a rich set of resource information that will assist you in enhancing your ongoing curriculum assessment and development in this all-important area. We expect faculty members to find it a valuable resource in several regards, including course development and other aspects of instruction. Academic coordinators of clinical education may also wish to share these materials with clinical instructors.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact our committee, the Board of Directors of the Section, or appropriate staff at the APTA.

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