

PRESS RELEASE

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Oncological Physical Therapy as New Clinical Specialty Approved Motion Creates a Path for Highly Trained PTs to Address Cancer Survivorship Needs

CALABASAS, CA. **August 2, 2016** — The American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) 2016 House of Delegates unanimously approved a motion to create a clinical specialty in the field of oncology, paving the way for PTs to become Certified Oncological Physical Therapists after completion of a minimum requirement of at least 2,000 hours of relevant clinical practice and successfully passing the certification examination. Examination preparation may include self-directed study of applicable didactic materials and oncology-focused coursework available from a number of sources including the APTA Learning Center, the [Oncology Section](#), and its online education partner, [EDUCATA](#).



“There are currently an estimated 15.5 million cancer survivors in the US, with well over 1.5 million new cases to be diagnosed yearly”, said Lisa VanHoose, Education Chair for the [Oncology Section of the APTA](#). “While the growth in survival rates is wonderful news, it also accentuates the severe shortage of professionals prepared to deliver specific, cancer-related rehabilitation. We simply *have to* increase the number of specialized PTs that today practice in oncology to meet this growing demand.” G. Stephen Morris,

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President of the Oncology Section points out that oncology specialists will additionally become mentors and resources to therapist who may not routinely treat patients with cancer. They will also be very valuable members of the interdisciplinary treatment team typically involved in cancer patient care.

“Cancer treatments are usually accompanied by severe side effects, from extreme fatigue and weakness to edema and fibrosis”, said Marilyn Pink, CEO of EDUCATA. “We are proud to provide clinicians with educational resources which will help prepare them for success on the specialty exam and –more importantly-- help them provide better care for this patient population.”

The motion creating the Oncology Specialization was presented by the American Board of Physical Therapy Specialties (ABPTS) and the APTA Board of Directors to the House of Delegates. Its approval makes it the 9th physical therapy specialty recognized by ABPTS, along with others in areas such as orthopedics, geriatrics, pediatrics, women’s health, and cardiopulmonary.

Several schools have already expressed interest in offering residency and fellowship programs which will provide therapists with the highly skilled clinical expertise required for oncology specialization. The Section hopes that these advanced training opportunities will be available by 2017, with applications for the oncology specialty examination expected to start in 2018.

About the [Oncology Section of the APTA](#): The Oncology Section advocates for ethical, effective, efficient and high quality care for individuals whose lives have been touched by cancer , lymphedema, and HIV. It serves **its** members and the profession by disseminating information on oncologic physical therapy and HIV disease and physical therapy as well as lymphedema management while fostering scientific inquiry and providing professional growth through education.

About [EDUCATA](#): The leading independent provider of online [physical therapy continuing education](#), EDUCATA utilizes an interactive platform to deliver a unique online, evidence based learning experience. The company offers a

broad spectrum of online courses from acute care to outpatient care; from musculoskeletal to cardiopulmonary and oncology; from pediatrics to geriatrics and from differential diagnosis to preventative treatment programs. Courses are taught by top-ranked educators and experienced clinicians and are accredited for continuing education.

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