



ONTARIO
PHYSIOTHERAPY
ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL REPORT
2020

OUR VISION

Ontarians are Healthier and Stronger through Physiotherapy

2020 was year three of our five-year strategic plan, a year of a global pandemic when physiotherapists, physiotherapist assistants and students met personal and professional challenges to be there for Ontarians. Together we continued to work towards our goal that **all** Ontarians will have access to physiotherapy as an essential element of optimal health, focusing our activities in three core areas: **mobilize and engage, innovation and excellence and advocacy for needed policy and system change.**

OPA's plan supports and contributes to the national collaborative plan of the Canadian Physiotherapy Association building on the value of our shared membership.

1 | MOBILIZE AND ENGAGE

#WEAREPT

PTs and PTAs used #WeArePT to share their stories on social media showing the difference they were making for Ontarians every day. OPA promoted, shared and “boosted” their posts to amplify the value of physiotherapy including to the Premier and the Minister of Health who were tagged in the OPA posts.

In total, 298, 623 people saw the posts in the one month campaign. wearept.ca



OPA on Instagram



Launched in December 2019, OPA's Instagram saw great engagement in 2020 with over 1,000 new followers and 50 posts highlighting the #WeArePT campaign, COVID-19 and advocacy updates, member benefits, professional development opportunities and more.

Engaging CPC Members: Townhalls and Two COVID-19 Pandemic Surveys

Community Physiotherapy Clinic (CPC) members engaged through virtual town halls and surveys sharing their experiences and challenges implementing the CPC program during the COVID-19 pandemic. This information informed our advocacy with the Ministry of Health.

1 | MOBILIZE AND ENGAGE



Bringing Member Voice to OPA Strategic Directions in 2021: Townhalls and Surveys

Members were engaged in the review of the OPA Strategic Plan for 2021 to adjust priorities to reflect the needs of members in a time of great change. More than 200 members and others over the course of three months participated in a survey, one of two town halls and other sector specific focused conversations.

OPA and Advisory Committees

We welcomed new members onto the Hospital and Home Care Advisory Committees, implemented the Private Practice Advisory Committee, and revitalized the Hospital and Home Care liaison networks. All have shared their expertise to help inform strategy and activities especially around the COVID-19 pandemic and health system transformation.



Board of Directors Outreach

Directors attended more than 12 outreach events at district and other stakeholder meetings around Ontario. Members and stakeholders engaged in critical conversations about the role and value of physiotherapists during health system transformation and the COVID-19 pandemic, along with opportunities to mobilize and amplify the PT voice within their communities.

Student Placements and the Pandemic

In addition to providing two clinical placement opportunities, OPA facilitated targeted communications from Ontario's universities to all catchment areas promoting the need for clinical placements. Despite challenges for organizations and clinics during the pandemic, many members took on these requests and supported our students.

1 | MOBILIZE AND ENGAGE

Members Engaging in their Communities for the Profession

- Although some events were cancelled due to the pandemic, many districts engaged with their local physiotherapy community by promoting the #WeArePT campaign, OPA and CPA events and student activities through social media platforms such as Facebook.
 - Many districts, such as the **Eastern Ontario District**, **Grey Bruce District**, **Central Toronto District**, and **Windsor District** held their Annual General Meetings and Executive Meetings virtually. These meetings provided an opportunity to reflect on key learnings from the pandemic.
 - **Kitchener-Waterloo District** had their district social event with prize giveaways for attendees and also participated in the Virtual MS Walk. Their team, along with family and friends, raised \$1000 for MS Society of Canada and walked 5km in their own neighbourhoods.
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Providing Local Support During the Pandemic

- **Northwestern Ontario** and **Eastern Ontario Districts** provided information and updates on COVID-19 through their social media platforms, including Facebook and Instagram, to keep members up-to-date. This included discussion among members on job postings, events, and their questions and concerns.
- **Grey Bruce District** held eight meetings on a biweekly basis during the first few months of the pandemic, which focused on navigating the state of lockdown and the re-opening of health care services, in order to support members.
- **York Region Scarborough District** collected information on demographics, practice settings, and engagement of the district with its members through their COVID-19 crisis survey.
- **Windsor District** held feedback meetings virtually with members that addressed the re-opening of health care services and the second wave of the pandemic to provide member support.

2 | ADVOCACY

COVID-19 Pandemic



OPA Advocates for Re-opening of Physiotherapy Services: In April and May, OPA wrote and advocated to the Co-Chairs of the Emergency Operations Committee Command Table and others urging the re-opening of physiotherapy services in the community to ensure full access to essential health services by Ontarians. Services in the community re-opened by end of May.



Access to PT and the Second Wave of the Pandemic: In September, OPA sent a letter and advocated to the Premier and the Chief Medical Officer of Health that services by physiotherapists and physiotherapist assistants working in all sectors are essential and should remain open. Services were not ordered to close or restrict beyond public health measures in the second wave or province-wide shutdown.



Pandemic Pay for Front Line Providers: OPA wrote, advocated and launched a public campaign including media stories to secure Pandemic Pay for physiotherapy front line providers. Though all were not included, confirmation was received from the Ministry of Long-Term Care that those (either employed by the home or contracted) working in Licensed Retirement Homes as well-TBC (not virtual) were eligible for the pandemic pay program.



PPE and Cardiorespiratory Physiotherapy: OPA advocated to the Deputy Minister of Health and Chief Medical Officer of Health (CMOH) for access to the appropriate PPE for cardiorespiratory physiotherapy. A position statement and an educational document were developed and picked up by Physiotherapy New Zealand cardiorespiratory special interest group who adapted it to meet their advocacy goals in this same area. The CMOH updated directives to allow for professionals to make point of care decisions on their own PPE needs.



Physiotherapy Provisional Practice: OPA President wrote to the President of the College of Physiotherapists of Ontario Council asking for remedial action to address concerns over loss of provisional practice for those who have not been able to access a second attempt to the PCE and future cohorts affected by delays in examinations during the pandemic.



Virtual Care and Funding: OPA advocated with all funders and was successful in ensuring that virtual visits were compensated at the same levels as in-person visits in many areas including WSIB, Auto Insurance, many extended health benefit providers, in home care and through the Community Physiotherapy Clinic program.

2 | ADVOCACY

Diversity, Inclusion and Anti-Racism

On June 1, Viivi Riis, President of the Canadian Physiotherapy Association released a statement in solidarity with those who experience racism and set out a commitment to action. OPA agrees it is not enough to be against racism, we must take action and begin needed changes within ourselves, our organizations, government and communities. We share in the grief of victims of racism. We commit to stand and to take action to address the individual and inherent systemic racism which have such a profound negative impact on Black, Indigenous and other racialized people. We commit to learn, to educate, to provide platforms for dialogue, to advocate and to implement change. We must leave no room for racism within ourselves, our profession and society as a whole.

- Paulette Gardiner Millar, President



In response to the events locally and globally, the OPA Board released a statement in June and directed the initiation of exploratory discussions with experts in the area of diversity, inclusion, and anti-black racism to determine next steps going forward for the Association, the profession and our communities and to help identify forums for needed conversations.

2 | ADVOCACY

Voice of Advocacy



Submission on proposed home and community care regulations under the Connecting People to Home and Community Care Act, 2020, which received Royal Assent on July 8, 2020.



Submission to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs for the 2020 Pre-Budget Consultations making the case for implementing the outstanding scope of practice for physiotherapists in Ontario as this would lead to healthcare and system improvements on behalf of patients while bringing no additional costs to the system.



Consultations and meetings with the Ministry of Health and other stakeholders including the Ontario Health (Quality Division) and the Rehab Care Alliance with focus on advocating to address implementation issues in new funding models such as Bundled Care.



Advocacy to the Ministry of Health to address issues within the CPC program, especially during the pandemic, resulting in the introduction of some measures to help mitigate the challenges experienced by CPCs during the pandemic.



Meeting with the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) to address issues faced by members including the low fee for service schedule for physiotherapy and compensation for incomplete POCs as a result of the pandemic and service interruption.



Leading as Chair of the WSIB Health Professions Forum for health care professional associations in this sector and as Co-Chair of the Coalition of Regulated Health Professions in Auto Insurance Reform.



Telerehabilitation during COVID-19 Survey

The Telerehabilitation During the COVID-19 Pandemic survey captured the experience of implementing telerehab during the COVID-19 pandemic with a focus on activities immediately following the emergency order to reduce in-person services in the community. Over 360 members participated and provided key information that formed a summary report that led to critical conversations and informed advocacy about virtual care with all stakeholders.

2 | ADVOCACY

COVID-19 Access and Health System Research

OPA partnered with the University of Toronto and St. Michael's Hospital on an MScPT research project to describe the patient experience with Bundled Care transitions from acute care to clinic-based or home-based physiotherapy.

OPA supported research in our community in many ways including:

- Submitted letter of support for a CIHR grant application for research to develop a toolkit that supports community dwelling elderly persons with hip fracture.
- Supported the recruitment of participants in the following studies:
 - o Interprofessional Health Care Provider Practice in Ontario's Family Health Teams in the COVID-19 Pandemic
 - o Goal setting with stroke survivors with aphasia: A multinational survey of the current practice and training needs of multidisciplinary rehabilitation staff
 - o Being a 'Good' Physiotherapist in Musculoskeletal Practice: An Inquiry into Practitioners' Perspectives
 - o Evaluation of novel data representations for virtual reality exergames to promote physical activity in older adults living with dementia
- Submitted a joint response with CPA to a project by The Centre for Health, Exercise and Sports Medicine at the University of Melbourne informed by an international advisory group that aims to determine which core capabilities are most important for physiotherapists to deliver quality care via videoconferencing.

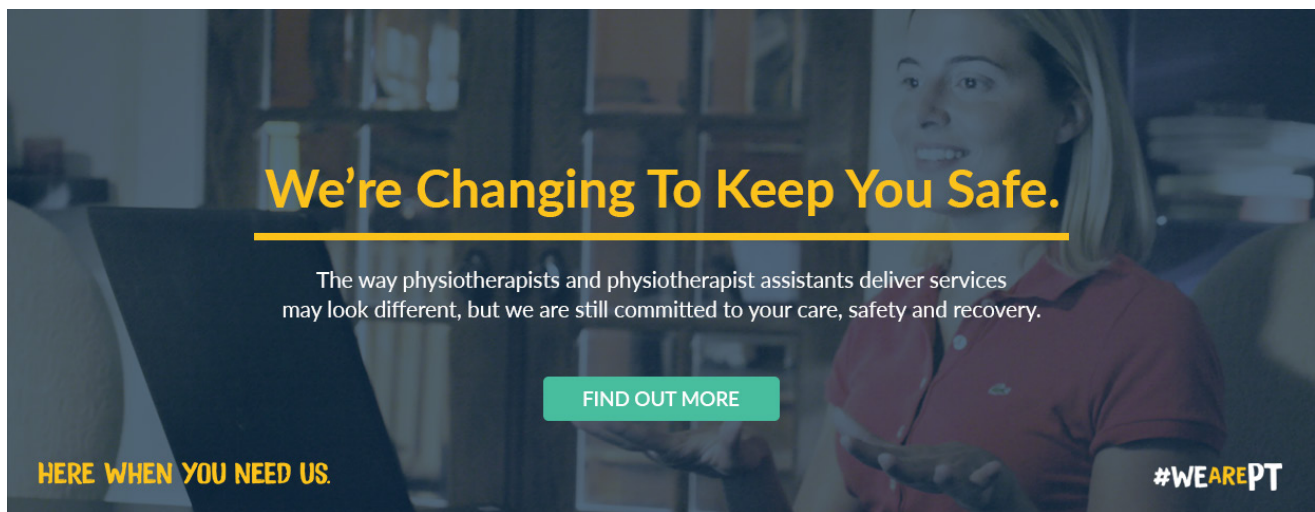
Ontario Health (Quality Division)

OPA was consulted and engaged member experts on a number of Ontario Health (Quality Division) projects which will lead to informed decision-making on health system reforms including:

- Ontario Health Technology Assessment Series Report: Long-Term Physiotherapy After Stroke
- Ontario Health Technology Assessment Series: Stance-Control Knee-Ankle-Foot Orthoses for People with Knee Instability
- Quality Standard and Patient Guide for Concussion

2 | ADVOCACY

'Here When You Need Us' Marketing Campaign



OPA launched a marketing campaign to promote the safe opening of in-person and virtual physiotherapy services during the pandemic. The campaign ran October to December and spoke to the essentiality of physiotherapy for Ontarians. The public was directed to resources about all the ways that physiotherapy can help, including new and innovative ways that PTs and PTAs are adapting to provide safe and effective care, including providing virtual care.

causes.discoverphysiotherapy.ca/here-when-you-need-us/

3 | PRACTICE RESOURCES, INNOVATION & EXCELLENCE

Wound Care Management Program



In 2020, 23 individuals completed the Introduction to Wound Care Management online course, and 9 individuals challenged and passed the quiz. Since the program began 41 physiotherapists have completed the quiz increasing our capacity to meet health care needs in this area.

Supporting Wise Choices for Professional Development

The OPA Education Committee developed a **Guide to Selecting Professional Development**. This new resource helps members choose courses and professional development opportunities that are high quality, provide value, and meet their learning needs.

Bringing Education to your Community through District Courses

- **Eastern Ontario District** hosted a course on 'Reconciling Biomechanics with Pain Science' with Greg Lehman, which had 40 attendees.
- **Northern Ontario District** sponsored two webinars, including 'Effective Telerehab' with Jocelyne Murdoch that had 43 registrants, and 'Mirror Therapy in Stroke: an Evidence Based Rehabilitation' by Venkadesan Rajendran that had 103 registrants.
- **London District** held a virtual discussion event on 'Adaptive Practice' with Cheryl Richardson and Chantal Montgomery.
- **Quinte St. Lawrence District** held a 'Diversity of Practice' panel with Sarah Bagg, Jonathan Daniel, Tom Doulas, Savvas Frantzeskos, Cassie Dionne, Stephanie Hibbert, and Avery Michels that was geared towards first year MScPT students at Queen's University with the purpose of demonstrating various practice settings and career opportunities that students can pursue after graduation.

3 | PRACTICE RESOURCES, INNOVATION & EXCELLENCE

COVID-19 Resources

- The Primary Care Advisory Committee developed a **Community-Based Physiotherapy during COVID-19** resource to reflect the role of home and community based physiotherapy in addressing the rehabilitation needs of individuals recovering from COVID-19. This resource went through three major revisions in 2020 to capture emerging research and guidelines. The resource provides insights on managing and treating the residual symptoms of COVID-19 and includes a complementary poster for public education.
- **COVID-19 FAQ:** OPA published, and updated bi-weekly throughout the pandemic, an FAQ resource to ensure that members had timely information to address their key questions on the implications of the pandemic on their practice, and were aware of key supports and programs that they could access.

Study of the Day

35 librarian curated “Study of The Day” posts were shared on Facebook and Twitter about the latest and most relevant research with **89,764** impressions on Facebook and **31,295** impressions on Twitter.



4 | VALUE FOR MEMBERSHIP

Membership

 **4867**

PHYSIOTHERAPIST
MEMBERS

 **764**

PHYSIOTHERAPIST
STUDENTS

 **48**

PHYSIOTHERAPIST
ASSISTANT
MEMBERS

 **342**

PHYSIOTHERAPIST
ASSISTANT
STUDENTS

Value for Membership – With OPA You Are at the Table

Rehabilitation Care Alliance
(RCA) Steering Committee
and advisory groups

RCA Subject Matter Expert
Group (ambulatory-based
rehabilitation), Community
Rehabilitation Position Paper

Ontario Health (Quality
Division) Standards
Committees

Alliance of Professional
Associations for
Community-Based Therapy
Services (APACTS)

Co-chair of the Coalition
of Health Professional
Associations in Automobile
Insurance Services (The
Coalition)

Coalition of Regulated
Health Professional
Associations (CORHPA)

University of Toronto
Academic Practice Leaders
Committee

University of Toronto
Ontario Internationally
Educated Physical Therapy
Bridging Program Advisory
Committee

Humber College OTA PTA
Advisory Committee

Financial Services Regulatory
Authority of Ontario's (FSRA)
Health Providers Industry
Advisory Group

WSIB Health Professionals
Forum (Chair)

AFTHO annual conference
exhibitor and participant

GTA Rehab Network best
practices day exhibitor

4

VALUE FOR MEMBERSHIP

Your Membership Benefits from a National Collaboration of All Components of the Association – OPA, CPA, Divisions

OPA is the secretariat of the Branch Presidents Forum – bringing together the resources and advocacy efforts of all provincial, territorial and national associations. We are stronger together.

Being Informed for Success

OPA members had exclusive access to up-to-the-minute information with 53 OPA Updates emails in 2020. Our website was updated with dedicated and easily accessible COVID-19 pages and we shared member experiences about the pandemic in our print newsletter, *Physiotherapy Today*.

With news on OPA's advocacy initiatives during the pandemic, professional development and access to public and member-only resources, members were kept informed.

OPA job, classified and courses emails continued to bring timely information to our members' inboxes.

District Grants and Awards

- **Eastern Ontario District** awarded the Cité Collégiale PTA-OTA bursary to **Abderrahim Zeroual** and the University of Ottawa PhD scholarship to **Lissa Pacheco Brousseau**.
- **Central Toronto District** awarded their University of Toronto MScPT Research Grant to the title '*Perspectives of People Living with a Spinal Cord Injury on Activity-Based Therapy in Canada*' by **Dr. Cindy Gauthier, PT, PhD, Dr. Kristin Musselman, PT, PhD, Michelle Boileau, Damian Chechlacz, Lovisa Cheung, Emily Lund, Avideh Khalili, and Emma Swaffield**. They awarded two University of Toronto MScPT Student Awards to Simone Wright Stein and Samuel Yentin.
- **London District** awarded their OPA-CPA Book Prize Literary Achievement Award (for excellence in student research) to the title '*EMG Spike Shape Analysis of Neck Musculature While Training on a Novel Neuromuscular Strength Training Device: A Case Study*' by **James Chana, Stefano Marrella, Nathan Cory, Sarah Tracey, Mitchell Van Teeling, and Jonathan Wiseman**. The top physiotherapy research project from Western was presented during the 2020 Western Physical Therapy convocation.

4

VALUE FOR MEMBERSHIP

New to Practice Relaunch - a Huge Success!

New to Practice (N2P) members benefited from seven mentorship coaching sessions and resources:

LANDING YOUR 1ST PT JOB - HOW TO SHINE LIKE A PRO WITH YOUR RESUME & INTERVIEW!

Guest Coaches: Denise Taylor, PT, Manager, North West Regional Rehabilitative Care and St. Joseph's Care Group

Paulette Gardiner Millar, PT, Senior Regional Director of Ontario East Operations, Director of Quality pt Health

HOW TO PREPARE FOR YOUR FIRST PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Guest Coaches: Denise Taylor, PT, Manager, North West Regional Rehabilitative Care and St. Joseph's Care Group

Paulette Gardiner Millar, PT, Senior Regional Director of Ontario East Operations, Director of Quality pt Health

HOW TO TREAT MVA PATIENTS SUCCESSFULLY

Guest Coach: Viivi Riis PT, MSc
President of the Canadian Physiotherapy Association

HOW TO AVOID BURNOUT AS A HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL

Guest Coach: Deepy Sur Ph.D., MSW, RSW
Chief Executive Officer,
Ontario Association of Social Workers

FUNDAMENTALS FOR CHRONIC PAIN MANAGEMENT

Guest Coach: Dr. Jordan Miller, BSc, MSc, PhD

HOW TO FIND YOUR 1ST MENTOR AND MAKE THE MOST OF IT

Guest Coach: Dr. Judy King, MHSc, BHScPT

HOW TO BUILD A CASELOAD & HOW TO BRAND YOURSELF- TOP TIPS!

Guest Coach: Jennifer Howey, Physiotherapist, Clinic Owner, Adjunct Lecturer at the University of Toronto MScPT Program, and International Master Instructor for Nordic Pole Walking

4 | VALUE FOR MEMBERSHIP

Engaging from Day 1 – OPA and Students and New Grads

OPA presented to all five Ontario physiotherapy university programs and the Ontario Internationally Educated Physical Therapy Bridging Program on the role the Association plays in professional life, on issues impacting practice and on being a professional.

OPA supported entry to practice PTs with a fully accessible, online New Grad Toolkit for 2020 graduates.

OPA provided prize packs for the McMaster Rehabilitation Sciences Charity Ball which aimed to raise funds for KidsAbility Centre for Child Development.

Local Engagement of Students through Districts

- **York Region Scarborough District** surveyed new graduates to ensure that their student night reflected their interests.
- **Windsor District** held two new graduate mentorship meetings with new graduates.
- **Central Toronto District** participated in the University of Toronto virtual job fair, which was converted from an annual in-person job fair into a virtual job fair and included 30 student attendees. This included participation of 11 employers and the OPA/CPA provided information on the value of membership. They also participated in the University of Toronto Student Membership Drive.




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Contact Us

 Ontario Physiotherapy Association
55 Eglinton Avenue East, Suite 210
Toronto ON M4P 1G8

 414-322-6866 / 800-672-9668

 physiomail@opa.on.ca

 opa.on.ca