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Chair, 5th Congressional District

Nathan McGriff, PTA
Secretary, North Region

Dana Daniel Blake, PT
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Robin Irwin, PT
2nd Congressional District

T-Michael Dougherty
PTA, South Region

Robert Fleming Jr., PT
1st Congressional District

Margaret Hemm
Consumer Member

Legal Counsel

J. Matt Bledsoe
Assistant Attorney General

Administrative Staff

Kathy Miller
Executive Director

Angela Warr
Executive Assistant III

Kristi Mullins
Accounting

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Alabama Board of Physical Therapy Newsletter

From the Desk of the Executive Director



Let me begin by wishing each of you a happy and prosperous 2023! While I look forward to a productive new year, I want to highlight some of the Board's accomplishments in 2022.

In early 2022, we started the process of becoming a paperless office. To ensure that our efforts complied with Alabama records law, we began with an on-site visit from the Alabama Department of Archives and History (ADAH). During that visit we received training from ADAH staff on proper file naming, file formats, and file back-up procedures. After receiving proper training, we began scanning and electronically storing existing licensee files.

At the same time, we stopped creating paper files for new licensees. While the goal is to be a predominantly paperless (95%) office, we will maintain paper versions of many financial documents, contracts, and meeting minutes. In addition to benefiting the environment, going paperless reduces spending on such things as paper, printers, and toner. It also shortens time spent by staff managing paper files.

This past year we also saw improvements in technology. We applied for and were awarded two grants from the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy (FSBPT) for technology upgrades. These grants allow for more efficient processing and further aid in the mission of public protection. Additionally, improvements were made to the Board website: licensees can now make online payments for an expired license renewal and purchase a license replacement/certificate.

Throughout the year we engaged in community outreach by conducting school trainings for future licensees. These trainings allowed us to provide students with information about the Practice Act and help them navigate through the licensure process. On August 6, 2022, we were an exhibitor at the APTA Alabama Annual Conference. Being an exhibitor enabled us to interact with and provide information about the Board to current and future licensees.

Earlier this year, Kristi Mullins joined the ABPT team as an Accounting Specialist. In addition to helping with accounting duties, she assists with general office tasks. Kristi has over 25 years' experience in public service and has proven to be an asset to the Board.

In conclusion, while my staff and I are pleased with the accomplishments of 2022, we have even greater goals for 2023!

-Kathy Miller, Executive Director



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Board Member News

Thank you Alina Adams for your Service!



On behalf of the Board I would like to take this time to show our appreciation to Ms. Alina Adams. She has recently completed her second appointed term representing the 4th Congressional District as a PT Board member. We want to thank you for your time and energy spent serving to protect the public of the State of Alabama. It has been an honor to serve alongside you for the last 9 years. You were thorough and passionate when tasked with committee work, including leading us through an overhaul of continuing education requirements to help ensure competent and safe therapists. Your knowledge, leadership, and compassion to serve have set a great example to us all. We wish

you well in all your future endeavors! - Nathan McGriff, PTA, Secretary

We are really blessed and appreciative to have had Alina's service on the board over the last 10 years. She brought a lot of insight and wisdom, particularly as an experienced educator in physical therapy. She will be missed. - Jonathan Zecher, PT, Chair

Welcome to the Board, Robin Irwin, PT, MS, ScDPT!

Dr. Irwin has been a practicing physical therapist for 37 years. She owned a pediatric practice in Decatur for 35 years prior to moving to Montgomery and entering the field of academia. She currently teaches basic physical therapy and pediatric courses at Faulkner University. Dr. Irwin received a B.S. degree in Physical Therapy from the University of South Alabama and a M.S. and ScDPT degree in Physical Therapy with Pediatric/ Neuro emphasis from the University of Tennessee Health Science Center in Memphis, Tennessee. She is very active in church related activities and medical/biblical mission work in Cusco, Peru, and Arusha, Tanzania. She has been married to her husband, Tom, for 39 years and they have three daughters, three sons-in-law and 9 grandchildren! The ABPT is looking forward to having Dr. Irwin utilize her 37 years of experience to protect the consumers of Alabama. Welcome from the Board!



Dr. Irwin pictured above in Tanzania.

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Update on Alabama as a Compact Privilege State

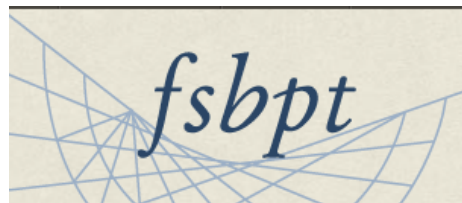


Hopefully you are aware by now that Governor Ivey signed legislation on March 18, 2021, to make Alabama the 31st state to join the PT Compact. However, Alabama is still not able to issue or accept “Compact privileges” yet. You can refer to <http://ptcompact.org/ptc-states> for an interactive map showing all the states in the PT Compact, as well as those who are currently issuing compact privileges.

Alabama is not able to issue Compact privileges until there are changes made to the Alabama Physical Therapy Practice Act (APTPA) and the Administrative Code to include Compact privileges. The Board has written a bill which will address all of the necessary changes to the APTPA and will be introduced in the House and Senate during the 2023 legislative session. The Board is working to secure sponsors for each bill and will diligently endeavor to move the bills forward in 2023.

Following passage of the bill, the Board anticipates that it could still take another year or two before Alabama will be ready to issue Compact privileges. We will continue to provide regular updates on Alabama’s progress in the Compact. Licensees can learn more about the Physical Therapy Licensure Compact on the Federation of State Board’s website here:

<https://www.fsbpt.org/Free-Resources/Physical-Therapy-Licensure-Compact>



- Jonathan Zecher, PT, Chair

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Being An Advocate

As I scrolled through Facebook over the Thanksgiving holidays, I enjoyed seeing posts of many of my friends and family all gathered around their loved ones for a family picture. I could not help but notice the grey hair and small frame of many of the grandparents and parents as the children and grandchildren cuddled up around them with loving arms.

This year was quite different for my family as we celebrated our first Thanksgiving without my mom. I had to reflect over the many years that I talked with medical staff and providers to encourage them to approve services, including physical therapy, for my mom to allow her the ability to continue to live independently. I was able to request specific tests and services that could assist the provider in making appropriate decisions about care. I accompanied my mother to doctors' visits and tried to be observant of changes in behavior, including new complaints of pain or confusion.



Often times I was told that my mother was old and it was expected that she would not be able to be as mobile as she had been previously. I had to be persistent and persuasive to ensure mom's needs were met. I observed my mom bounce back time and time again after receiving therapy. My mom was able to live alone, with services, until the year before she passed away at age 93 years.

I want to encourage each of you to accept your role as advocate for your parents and loved ones as they age because they can not do it alone.

You make a difference!

-Margaret Hemm, Consumer Member

Disciplinary Notices

Case #2022-011—Melody Restivo, PT
Practicing with an Expired License
Fine
Closed and Approved November 10, 2022

Case #2022-012—Meagan Nicole Bryant, PTA
Practicing with an Expired License
Fine
Closed and Approved November 10, 2022

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Hey, have you heard???

Happy New Year! I hope you all had a wonderful holiday season!

I wanted to take this opportunity to discuss several services offered by the Board.

Licensee Online Profile: We offer a Licensee Online Profile (think user account) under the “Services” tab on our website. Once you create your account (if you haven’t already), you can print a copy of your license at no cost to you! You can also update your contact information, see your recent continuing education and renewal history, and update your employment information. This is a valuable tool for licensees. Cool, right?

Replacement Certificates: As noted above, you can print your certificate at any time. However, you can now order a replacement certificate online through the Licensee Online Profile! This is the certificate that is printed on the heavy paper with a gold seal. No more printing the license replacement request form, trekking to your bank to purchase a \$5.00 money order, and mailing it us. You are now able to request the replacement and pay the fee from the comfort of your own couch...or chair!



The Expired Renewal Application is now online: As our office moves closer and closer to becoming paperless, we have implemented an online Expired Renewal application! If you should have need of this service, you will find it on our website under the “Licensing Renewal” tab. Be prepared to upload the appropriate continuing education, government issued ID, proof of legal presence in the U.S., and have your credit or debit card handy. Again, no more hiking to the bank to purchase a money order and mailing everything to us. This method is very similar to a regular license renewal and is intended to make the process easier, quicker, and more convenient for everyone!

Student Training: Are you a faculty member with a class of PT or PTA students about to graduate? ABPT staff offers training to future PTs and PTAs in which we cover the basics about the Board, licensure, and ethics. This training is offered in person or virtually. However, I will note that in person training often involves candy...and who doesn’t love candy? We have found that this training gives students the opportunity to ask questions that come up when they are close to graduation and the concept of being licensed is real! Did I mention the candy? Sorry...we do not have virtual candy but will make the presentation as fun and interactive for virtual students as possible.

If you have any questions about the above services offered by the ABPT, please feel free to reach out to us by email or phone. We are here to help!

-Angela Warr
Executive Assistant III

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Wellness Program (Impaired Practitioner)



WELLNESS

The Alabama Board of Physical Therapy continues to work with Dr. Michael Garver, DMD, to provide an Impaired Practitioner Wellness Program as a service to licensees in the State of Alabama. This program is designed to help licensees that are impaired by reason of illness, inebriation, excessive use of drugs, alcohol, narcotics, chemicals or other substances, or a result of a physical or mental condition. The self-reporting option provides the opportunity for a licensee to directly contact Dr. Garver and receive much needed help without jeopardizing their license. Self-reporting avoids a formal ABPT hearing, and the subsequent reporting to the National Practitioner Data Bank.

Additionally, there is no public record as participants are only known to the ABPT by case number. For assistance, PTs and PTAs may contact the Executive Director or Dr. Garver directly at the information below. Since its inception in 2014 the Wellness Program has assisted approximately 50 professionals. Currently the program has an impressive nearly a 100 percent success rate.

Mentors continue to be fundamental in the success of the program. They allow participants to have someone to turn to that have faced those same challenges of addiction. Mentors remain anonymous and time frame for participation is at each individual's discretion. If you are interested in becoming a mentor, please contact Dr. Garver at the contact below.

Michael Garver, DMD
P.O. Box 426
19260 North Mobile Street
Citronelle, AL 36522
E-mail: abptwellness@gmail.com
Phone: (256) 866-5585 Fax: (251) 866-5570
1-855-865-6704 (Wellness Center Hotline) - Executive Director



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Happenings



APTA Conference at
Jefferson State
Community College



Faulkner University's DPT Students' Thanksgiving
Celebration on November 15.
Submitted by PT Board Member Robin Irwin.



PTA Board Member T-Michael Dougherty's with his PTA
students as they offer free blood pressure checks during
the Service Learning Project during 8th Annual Camellia
City Fest in Greenville. Courtesy of LLBW Facebook page.

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AROUND THE ABPT OFFICE



Football themed tree as suggested by one of our Facebook followers.



We at the ABPT attempt to keep the office fun and festive when possible.

This year we were introduced to Pistachio the Cat (left) who gave tips during the renewal season and helped motivate our licensees to renew early!



Happy Harvest/ Thanksgiving!



Don't be afraid! He's a friendly ghost!



We hope you had the happiest of holidays and wish you a joyful and prosperous 2023!

-Kristi, Kathy, and Angela!



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WE ARE ON SOCIAL MEDIA!



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Connect with us on LinkedIn! Alabama Board of Physical Therapy

Follow, like, and connect with us for reminders, announcements, updates,
and other important information!

If you need anything, please feel free to call the Board Office
at (334) 242-4064 or email us at info@pt.alabama.gov.

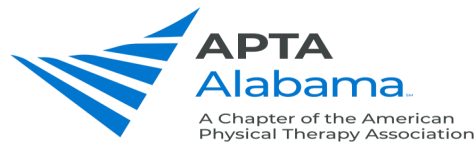
We encourage you to check out:



www.pt.alabama.gov



www.ptcompact.org



www.ptalabama.org



www.fsbpt.org

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