

To: APTA Component Leader
From: David W. Emerick, PTA, BBA, Chief Delegate, PTA Caucus
Re: One Vote at the Component Level of APTA
Date: February 22, 2010

At the 2010 APTA House of Delegates (HOD), the PTA Caucus will put forth a motion to amend APTA's bylaws pertaining to voting privileges at the component level. Specifically, the motion will promote the provision of one vote for PTA members at the chapter/section level. Currently, APTA bylaws limit the PTA member to ½ vote for the election of leaders and input on issues affecting the chapter/section.

Passing this RC will:

- Provide PTA members with one vote as they seek to responsibly elect their component leaders and address issues affecting the chapter/section;
- Provide the PTA anonymity in the voting process;
- Simplify the voting process by having one vote for all members; and
- Continue the process of integration and help restore the positive regard of many PTAs toward the Association.

Passing this RC will not:

- Change the clinical relationship between the physical therapist and PTA; or
- Change the current voting process at the national level.

When considering this proposed change in bylaws, it may be useful to consider the following:

- The history: PTAs were initially granted temporary APTA membership in 1973, which did not include voting rights. In 1975, the HOD established a PTA ("affiliate") membership category and after considerable debate, ½ vote at the component level was the agreed upon compromise.
- No other known health professional organization discriminates their member groups through inequitable voting rights.
- PTAs serving in positions of leadership within APTA (eg, component board of directors, APTA appointed advisory panels, committees, and task forces, PT-PAC, PT Foundation) and with external groups, including state licensing boards and the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy (FSBPT) exercise one vote responsibly and for the good of the profession and the public.
- There is no evidence that membership dues or level of education for any of APTA's membership designations have been linked to voting privileges. Dues for each membership designation appear to be determined according to earning potential.
- PTAs are equal stakeholders in the success of the profession for their economic future.
- The PTA Caucus has consistently supported APTA's mission, goals, and vision as evidenced by the Caucus's mission statement:
"The Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) Caucus, serving with integrity and responsiveness, will be the voice of the physical therapist assistant in meeting the vision, goals and objectives of the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) and the profession."

In conclusion, the PT and PTA work together to promote the recovery, health, and wellness of our patients/clients and the public. We are One in Mission, One in Vision, One Member, and One Vote. It is time for physical therapists and PTAs to take the next step within the Association; to live our brand and 'Move Forward.'

Respectfully, thank you.