



The A Club

A Letter of Introduction

The year **2020** is expected to bring **5.7 million** people with dementia into our healthcare system. In all areas of healthcare, efforts are underway to improve how our communities can help people affected by dementia. Many of us are identifying and developing areas where we can work more effectively with other medical healthcare professionals to provide better care.

There are now tremendous opportunities for physical therapists and physical therapist assistants to provide dementia care services. The number one modifiable risk factor for prevention of dementia in the United States is inactivity, followed by depression, mid-life hypertension, mid-life obesity, low education and diabetes.¹ Ongoing research continues to support functional status models as very good predictors of acute hospital readmissions and discharge dispositions, and as vital indicators of functional pathology and care burdens.²⁻⁵

To help focus attention on dementia care issues across our country, starting July 1st, 2015, the Cognitive and Mental Health Special Interest Group (CMH SIG) of the APTA's Academy of Geriatric Physical Therapy (AGPT) is launching a country-wide campaign called the A Club. The "A" conveys the concept of achieving excellence in assessing the whole person. The A Club's 2015 six-month mini-series highlights physical therapy assessment and care management of cognitive health, hallmark behaviors in different stages of dementia, and pain in people with dementia.

We invite you to join the A Club and engage your colleagues (especially those who may not yet be members of the AGPT) in discussions about these topics. If you want to provide thoughtful feedback to the leaders of the CMH SIG, please contact your APTA State Advocate. If you are in a state that does not yet have an APTA State Advocate, please help where you can and join our contingency of volunteers at your local or state level. If you want to show your support of our efforts, become an active member of our CMH SIG by signing up here:

www.geriaticsppt.org/members/special-interest-groups.

Thank you in advance for taking your time to share your ideas and talents with all of us. Your contributions will help direct the focus of our programs for CSM 2016 and beyond.

Wishing you every success, wherever you practice!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dr. Lise McCarthy". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr. Lise McCarthy, PT, DPT, GCS
CMH SIG Founding Chair

References:

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2. Shih, SL, Gerrard P, et al. Functional Status Outperforms Comorbidities in Predicting Acute Care Readmissions in Medically Complex Patients. *J Gen Intern Med*. 2015 May 9. [Epub ahead of print].
3. Montero-Odasso M, et al. Gait Velocity in senior people. An easy test for detecting mobility impairment in community dwelling elderly. *Journal of Nutritional Health Aging*. 2004; 8(5): 340-3.
4. Rabadi MH, Blau A. Admission ambulation velocity predicts length of stay and discharge disposition following stroke in an acute rehabilitation hospital. *Neurorehabil Neural Repair*. 2005 Mar;19(1):20-6.
5. Fritz S, Lusardi M. White Paper: "Walking Speed: The Sixth Vital Sign." *J Geriatr Phys Ther*. 2009; 32(2): 46-9.