



Spring 2018

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Upcoming Events:

**Central District Meeting
(CEU Opportunity) at
SHRP on April 19 5:30 -
8:30pm**

**MSOTA Board Meeting
Friday April 27**

**MSOTA'S 5th Annual
Run, Walk, and Roll is
being held on April 28
HCC Ridgeland**

LACE UP THOSE RUNNING SHOES...

It is time for MSOTA's Annual Run, Walk, or Roll. Please join us April 28th at Holmes Community College for our largest fundraiser. Can you beat your personal best and advocate for your profession at the same time? Yes!! If you are not a runner, don't worry; there will be many walkers enjoying the lovely route through Olde Town Ridgeland.



Register at: www.mississippiota.org/2018-race-infoz
or at racesonline.com/events/msota-run-walk-and-roll

MSOTA President-Elect

Kelly Crawford

Congratulations to Kelly Crawford on her election as the MSOTA President-Elect. Kelly has served MSOTA



as the Central District co-chair for many years. She was also instrumental in continuing the MSOTA 5K as an annual event. We look forward to Kelly's future leadership for our Association.

News from the MSOTA Reimbursement Chair

Amanda Jordan, OTR/L



REIMBURSEMENT ISSUES: CURRENT AND FOLLOW-UP 2018 Therapy Cap Changes

Congress' approval of the federal spending package in January (retroactive to January 01, 2018) didn't just eliminate the hard caps on therapy. It ushered in a new era of payment thresholds, payment rates for physical therapist assistants (PTAs) and occupational therapist assistants (OTAs) and other new structures and guidelines.

These are as follows:

1. Use of the KX modifier and the trigger for possible medical review -

Outpatient therapy under Medicare now has a \$2,010 threshold for physical therapy and speech therapy combined and \$2,010 for occupational therapy; services delivered beyond that require a KX modifier indicating that the service meets the criteria for a payment exception. When therapy reaches \$3,000, it's subject to possible targeted medical review—although CMS didn't receive any additional funding to conduct these reviews.

2. Physical therapy and speech-language pathology still are lumped together -

Just as in the previous payment system that included a hard cap and exceptions process, the new system doesn't separate physical therapy from speech-language pathology in establishing thresholds. Those \$2,010 and \$3,000 limits are for physical therapy and speech-language pathology therapy combined.

3. The thresholds apply to all part B outpatient therapy services—including services provided by hospital outpatient departments.

For the brief time beginning in January when the therapy cap was in place, hospital outpatient facilities were not subject to the cap. That changed with the adoption of the budget package, and now these departments or clinics are subject to the thresholds: \$2,010 for use of the KX modifier and \$3,000 for potential targeted medical review.

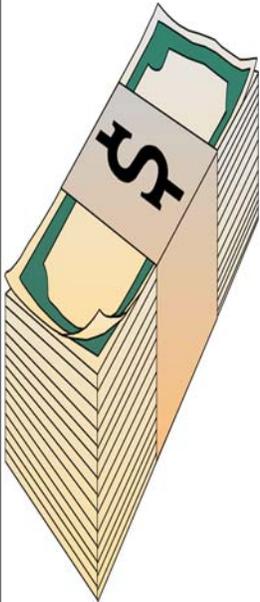
4. The OTA and PTA payment differential will start in 2022—along with a special claims designation.

In the post-cap payment system, outpatient therapy services performed by physical therapist assistants (PTAs) and occupational therapy assistants (OTAs) will be reimbursed at 85% of the Medicare physician fee schedule. However, that's not set to happen until 2022.

For now, claims do not include a way to designate whether a service was delivered by an assistant, but that too will change by 2022, when CMS will develop a modifier to make that distinction. Between now and then, look for opportunities to comment on proposed rules around this process, along with guidance and more details as they develop.

5. Home health also will be subject to the OTA and PTA payment differential, absent a plan of care.

The 85% payment differential for services provided by a PTA or OTA will apply to home health care provided to Medicare part B beneficiaries—but only when a home health plan of care is not in effect. The budget deal that resulted in the end to the hard cap also established other new rules for home health.



(continued)

News from the MSOTA Reimbursement Chair Amanda Jordan, OTR/L

Mississippi Division of Medicaid CPT Reimbursement

I have had several inquiries related to the new cognitive CPT codes that were added this year by CMS and whether they were going to be reimbursed by Medicaid or not. I spoke with a representative from MS Medicaid this week and he confirmed that they are continuing to **not** reimburse 97535 (self-care). In addition, they are **not** reimbursing for either of the new cognitive codes that replaced 97532. These are G0505 and 97127.

As always, MSOTA will continue to advocate for the best interest of our practitioners as well as our patients and will stay on top of keeping you informed as well as working for reimbursement in areas we feel most affect our patient care. Thank you for your questions and your feedback – keep it coming!

MSOTA ANNUAL CONFERENCE UPDATE Danielle Whittington, Con't Ed Chair



Thank you for coming to our 2018 Annual Conference! Our response was amazing, our speakers were phenomenal, and we had great feedback all around. I want to thank Amanda Jordan, our Executive Director for handling all the details that makes it run so smoothly. Save the Date! Next year, our conference is scheduled for **February 23, 2019 at the Clyde Muse Center**. We are working on a great speaker on documentation, prevention, and winning audits since we see the changes continually evolving in every area.





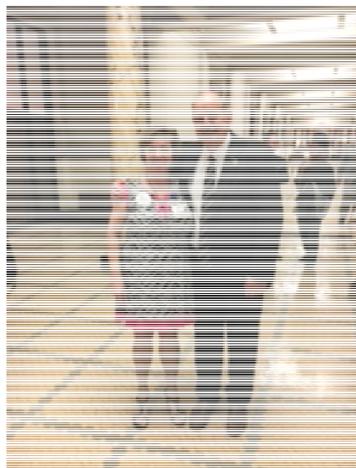
Legislative Day Update

Glenda Hux, Legislative Chair

MSOTA held another successful Legislative Appreciation Day on February 1, 2018, and we are already planning for the 2019 event. Same time—7:30 a.m., same place—State Capitol Rotunda! **February 6, 2019.**

What do we mean by successful?

OT and OTA students and faculty from all areas of the state attended., and we're carving relationships with key contacts in the legislature. Our legislators **know** about occupational therapy and **are interested in listening** to what we have to say! Isn't that what advocacy is all about?



If you have any topics or concerns that you want us to bring up as a member of our Association during the next legislative session, please don't hesitate to contact me at ghux25@gmail.com.

The time to prepare for 2019 is now!

The MSOTA Spotlight is on...

Danielle Whittington



What do you love most about being an Occupational Therapist?

I love the versatility. I love that I can find a place for what we've been taught in almost anything. I find myself being able to use these gifts and knowledge in the most unexpected places. It is such a rewarding feeling. **Give us some examples?** My favorite is the ball field at my sons' ball games. They are only 3 and 5 so you know that is basically herding cats around the baseball and soccer fields. However, I have been able to watch some swings and kicks or how to help break down the game into smaller areas of understanding for them. I can pick up balance difficulties, visual perceptual problems, and lots of abnormal ataxic movements that the coaches don't understand how to fix those areas efficiently. We have some pretty good teams with a free OT on staff standing by! I can also run a mean "dugout" so that its organized and flows.

Tell us where you work?

I am a 4th grade reading and English teacher now at Columbia Elementary School. I still work PRN at a local SNF and LTC facility here in town after school, and I supervise some great COTAs. I know that is a strange job to switch to, but I use so many OT skills in the classroom daily, I don't feel like I have left the field at all. We do lots of movement, vertical work, hands on tasks, and even cursive to music. If you ever look in my classroom, it is a very "outside the box" environment. I am blessed with an administration and fellow co-workers that embrace my eccentric ideas.

What class do you go back to in your mind from OT school?

Oh goodness, I really feel like I have such a great understanding of so many things from that time; I would have to narrow it down to two. That would have to be our Framework/Task Analysis class with Joyce Titus, who I could have sworn at the time was going to kill me and our research classes with several of the faculty. From our very first foundation class, I learned how to defend our profession to ANYONE. I can explain why I am walking a patient to a PT, I can explain why I need to use multiple modalities along with functional treatments to a physician, I can defend my services to insurance companies, and I can educate a family about expectations of the diagnoses and why I am doing what I am. I love that book that I once wanted to burn. Also, understanding research articles is vital. I think we must educate ourselves continually and progress ourselves and our profession. All those article reviews we did in school have come back to help me in so many ways!

What are your goals?

I have personal and professional goals I strive for daily. I most importantly want to be a beacon of light for the Lord, I want to let others: patients, students, or the public be able to see a light from above through me. My husband and I want to raise our two little people to be amazing big people. I want them to be kind to others and put us in a nursing home with a view. (You know boys will slap you in one in an instant.) I also want to continue my education and get my doctorate- teachers don't get paid quite as much as OTs, so that is going to take a little while to get done. But, I will one day!

What is your position on the MSOTA Board?

I am the CEU coordinator. I work with our executive director, the district chairs, and the other board members to facilitate opportunities for our members to get professional development. I think there are SO many members that have knowledge to share with us, and I would love to see them come and teach others his or her goodness! Email me! We need YOU!

Tell us about yourself and give us some information we didn't know?

I have been married to Jordan Whittington for 13 years and we have two sons, Harper (5) and Finn (3). We live in Columbia, MS. I love Harbo Gummy Bears (only the red and clear) and I don't eat meat. I think balloons are a waste of money, I wear flip flops regardless of the weather, and I am obsessed with plants but they never live. It's kind of sad. We are like the hospice house for green things.

MSOTA DISTRICT NEWS

NORTHERN DISTRICT NEWS

In the northern part of the state, we are trying to stay above water, literally. The rain keeps coming, but we are staying positive that warmer weather and sunshine is on its way. As far as upcoming events in the area, North Mississippi Medical Center is hosting their 14th Annual Multidisciplinary Rehab Conference. The conference will be held on March 30, 2018 at the main unit. Registrants must attend the entire day to receive 8 hours of CEU credits, no late or early departure. These CEU credits have been approved by the MS State Board of Health for OT and PT, as well as ASHA. One must register prior to the conference. No registration at the door. The conference is addressing rehabilitation needs across the life span with topics ranging from ethical dilemmas, assistive technology, acute rehab, splinting the hand, pelvic floor, home modifications and wheelchair technology. The day begins at 7:30 a.m. with 2-3 tracks each session. The cost of the conference is \$150.00 for non-NMHS employees and is free to NMHS employees. For more information email addressingrehabneeds@gmail.com.

February flashed before our eyes and here we are in March already, but I wanted to recognize that February was Low Vision Awareness Month. According to the Glaucoma Research Foundation, 4.2 million people 40 years and older have vision impairments and 3 million individuals have low vision. Cheri Nipp OTR/L, SCLV is an occupational therapist, who also has her Specialty Certification in Low Vision Rehabilitation from AOTA. She has teamed up with NMMC Retina Center and the Lions Club of Tupelo to collect old eyeglasses, reading glasses, sunglasses, magnification devices and/or any closed circuit TVs for those in need. You can still make a difference in these patients affected by low vision by making a donation by April 2, 2018. You can drop off any donations by the NMMC-Tupelo Wellness Center, Retina Center, Nursing Office or Clinic Administration. For further information, you can contact cnipp@nmhs.net or call 377-3340.

Last but not least, I would like to have some input from our members on what topics you would be interested in for continuing education in our area. So please feel free to contact me via email at bpeters@nmhs.net or text/call 662-255-2780.

Thanks,
Brandi Peters, OTR/L
MSOTA Northern District Chair

MSOTA DISTRICT NEWS

DELTA DISTRICT

There will be a short meeting of the Delta District
Wednesday, May 23, 2018 6 PM
The Pharm , 107 W Floyce St, Ruleville, MS 38771

Please contact Brad Cooper for information.
Email-Brad.Cooper@northsunflower.com

SOUTH CENTRAL DISTRICT NEWS

We are in the process of planning some CEU opportunities in the Columbia, MS area. Be on the look out starting this summer for a series of events, headed your way! If you have something specific you want to see- let Danielle Whittington know! We are all working together to get speakers in YOUR area.

CENTRAL DISTRICT NEWS

There will be a continuing education opportunity on April 19th at the SHRP building, beginning at 5:30 pm. Attendance is open to all and MSOTA members can earn 1, 2, or 3 CEU's. This includes a poster session during the first hour followed by a 2 hour workshop. Stay tuned for further details on this opportunity to get those final few hours you need for renewal!

MERIDIAN DISTRICT NEWS

The Meridian District held a mini conference Saturday September 30, 2017. We had a great turnout of 20 attendees as Penny Rogers OTR/L taught us about using Ergonomics in a variety of settings . I send a big thank you to Penny for her time, effort and expertise. It was well received and rated highly. For 2018, plans are still being made for meetings . The usual meeting place for our meetings at Anderson's may not be available so I am looking at alternate places and dates. I will post things as I know. Thank you for your patience.

Scott White OTR/L, CHT
Meridian District Chair



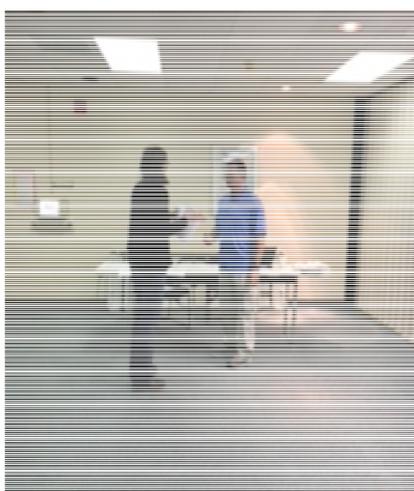
MSOTA DISTRICT NEWS

COASTAL DISTRICT NEWS

The Coastal and South-Central Districts held an awesome Fall Mini Conference Saturday, October 28, 2017, with 23 professionals in attendance to learn and practice clinical skills with neuro muscular electrical stimulation regarding CVAs and RA. Everyone had positive comments about the presenter, Susan Jackson, PT, CEEAA, NASM-CES, from Accelerated Care Plus (ACP), a division of Hanger Prosthetics, who graciously travelled from Kentucky to impart her wisdom and experience to our enthusiastic group. Thanks again to Jessica Cornett, South-Central District Chair, for providing the Wesley Medical Center in Hattiesburg, MS, as the host site.

We are excited to announce another CEU opportunity for the Coastal District just in time for Occupational Therapy Month! Krista Madere, LOTR, will discuss "Movement Disorders" Saturday, April 14, from 10:00 a.m. to Noon, at the University of Southern Mississippi (USM) Technology Learning Center. Contact Julie LeBlanc, MSOTA Coastal District Chair, at jal7093@cableone.net for registration and look for additional information on the www.mississippiota.org website during the next month.

Julie LeBlanc, MS, OTR/L, SCLV
MSOTA Coastal District Chair
MSOTA Vice President



Pictures from Coastal /South Central Fall Mini-conference 2017



SCHOOL NEWS

Holmes Community

The Holmes Community College OTA Program is excited to welcome the new Academic Fieldwork Coordinator, Cade Montague, MOTR/L. Cade brings a passion for the field of occupational therapy and a wealth of professional experience. The OTA faculty is embracing the transition with an eager attitude and desire to continually challenge the students to strive for excellence. Currently, the second year OTA students are completing their Level II fieldwork with positive reviews from the clinical instructors. The OTA faculty would like to thank each fieldwork educator for providing their time and sharing their clinical expertise. We could not do it without you! The first year OTA students are working diligently this semester and are excited about our upcoming pediatric camp! The OTA faculty and students look forward to participating in the MSOTA 5K in April and the opportunity to network with the wonderful practitioners from our state.

Kana Ledbetter Williams, COTA/L OTA Program Director



Ittawamba Community College

Everything is going great at Ittawamba Community College! Our 14 sophomore students will be finishing up their Level IIA fieldwork rotations next week and moving on to their final fieldwork placements on March 12th. We are so appreciative of our fieldwork educators who devote their time, share their knowledge, and provide excellent learning opportunities during these clinical experiences.

Our spring application process is in full force. With the April 1 deadline quickly approaching, we have already received 96 applications. We will review applications next month and hold interviews the final week of May.

The students have had great opportunities to volunteer their time with various community service projects over the past year. So far, they have volunteered with the Ronald McDonald House, Special Olympics, Sheltering Tree and Havis Kids Mother/Son Ball. This summer, many will serve as counselors at Camp Tik-a-with-a. This is a summer camp for children with special needs. We are looking forward to additional opportunities in the future.

Our freshmen students, thus far, have raised over \$2500 through fundraising efforts. This money will go to support local organizations that benefit those served by occupational therapy. Each May, during our graduation celebration, students present these monetary gifts to the chosen recipients. This is always a very exciting and rewarding time for all, as the students see how their efforts can benefit others.

It is hard to believe, but graduation is just around the corner (May 12). We have 14 very excited sophomores who are anxiously awaiting that day, as they can then transition from the position of student to practitioner. We are excited for them and look forward to celebrating their accomplishments with them!

Dee Dee Lomenick, MA, OTR/L

OTA Program Director

SCHOOL NEWS Continued

Pearl River Community College

The Pearl River Community College OTA program is happy to report that all of our 2017 graduates passed their NBCOT examination. Level II sophomore students reported having excellent experiences in their first rotation and are in their second rotation. We thank all of our fieldwork partners from the bottom of our hearts. Without your dedication, the students would be unable to blossom before they enter the field.

The freshmen class is in the midst of their most challenging semester. Pediatrics and kinesiology at the same time! They recently went to a local nursing home and each led a resident in a small craft project. They have gone on several field trips this semester including an inpatient psychiatric OT program and will be starting 6 weeks pediatric level I fieldwork soon.

Mrs. Nikki Page will be moving on to a new career opportunity after this semester. She has done an outstanding job as our fieldwork coordinator and we will miss her greatly. She has made an impact on our students and program that will last for years to come.

PRCC is presently taking resumes: COTAs with BS degrees and OTRs who may be interested in joining PRCC in the fieldwork coordinator capacity can contact Tim Pulver at 601-528-4774 or email at tpulver@prcc.edu.

Timothy Pulver, M.Ed., OTR/L

Director - Occupational Therapy Assistant Program

University of Mississippi Medical Center Student Occupational Therapy Association

The UMMC Student Occupational Therapy Association (SOTA) has been involved in a number of projects and meetings throughout the year already! On Valentine's day, the association hosted our own assistant professor and certified hand therapist, Robin Parish, for an informative meeting about becoming board certified with an emphasis on certified hand therapy. The meeting was informative, and students had the opportunity to ask various questions on the subject. We are also looking forward to hosting former UMMC student and current OT at the VA, Casey Stevens, in April! Casey will be discussing how to search for employment and educating students more about the VA.



SOTA Faculty Appreciation Luncheon

SOTA also recently hosted a faculty appreciation luncheon that included sandwiches, fruits and deserts. We enjoyed treating our faculty members to show them how much we appreciate them every day!

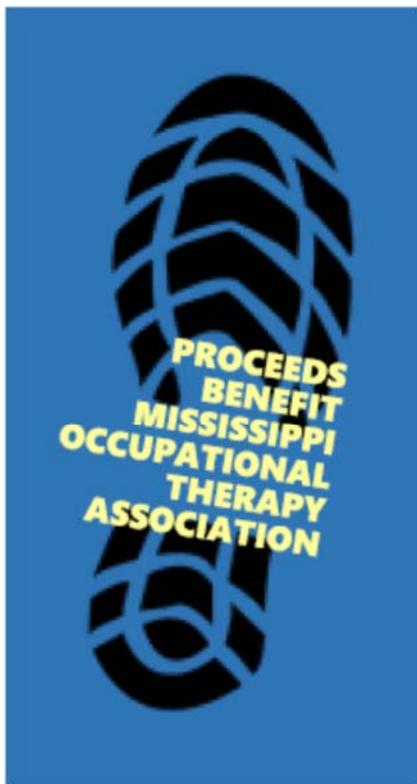
In addition to these events, the association is currently collecting items for the our philanthropy serving the Smith Robertson Senior Center in Jackson. SOTA members are collecting small non-refrigerated items such as snacks, candies and canned goods as well as everyday items such as shampoo and soaps. These items will help to stock the center's pantry as well as supply prizes for their daily bingo game. We are excited to continue our partnership with the Smith Robertson Senior Center this year!

Layna Lovelady SOTA Public Relations Chair



5TH ANNUAL
5K RUN,
WALK
& ROLL

+10K RUN & KID'S FUN RUN



\$25
EARLY
REGISTRATION

GROUP
DISCOUNTS
AVAILABLE

SATURDAY 4/28

Holmes CC – Ridgeland, MS

Pick up Race Packet & T-Shirts 7-7:45 am

5K/10K Begins at 8:00 am

Kid's Fun Run Begins at 9:15 am



WWW.RACESONLINE.COM/EVENTS/MSOTA-RUN-WALK-AND-ROLL TO REGISTER ONLINE!



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MSOTA WEBSITE

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP ONLINE!

mississippiota.org



WHY SHOULD YOU BE A MEMBER?

Keeping you up-to-date on current events at the state and national level via the website, newsletters, and email blasts.

Giving you access to a member only portion of our website to define your profile and network with other members throughout the state.

Having a voice in regards to your profession through MSOTA sponsored surveys, elections, and District meetings.

Free registration for District CEU events and discounted registration for statewide CEU events.

Quick Links

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MSOTA Calendar

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Category: Events

Fri Apr 27, 2018

[MSOTA Spring Board Meeting](#)

Category: Events

Sat Apr 28, 2018

[MSOTA 5/10K Run, Walk, or Roll](#)

Category: Events