CHAIR’S VISION FOR 2017
Lise McCarthy, PT, DPT, GCS

It’s a whole new ballgame this year with so many changes occurring as a result of global, national, and local elections. I see these election cycles as opportunities for motivated people to remain/become more engaged in their communities, and appreciate the creative energy that change often brings.

Within our AGPT, the results of last year’s election means we have a new Vice-Chair, Christy Ross, PT, DPT, GCS, CDP, MSCS. As one of our co-Research Liaisons, Dr. Ross has been actively engaged in our young CMH SIG since its birth in 2014. As examples of her involvement, she presented a team-based CMH SIG-sponsored lecture at CSM in 2016 and a team-based CMH SIG sponsored pre-conference course in 2017. For those of you who do not know her yet, she brings to our CMH SIG leadership group a very positive, thoughtful, inclusive, can-do attitude, along with a dynamic, creative energy and (much appreciated by me) a strong technology skill-set which are all high-lighted in our rebranded newsletter, The Brainiac. In this Vice-Chair newsletter creation, and in her own words later in this issue, she will set forth her vision this year in describing how she plans to help us collaborate for the benefit of our profession.

As Chair of our CMH SIG, my goal for the remainder of my second term is to continue to focus on fulfilling the AGPT Board of Directors’ mandates. One mandate is to strengthen and expand our professional relationships, in part, by continuing to engage new people and promote new perspectives. With this in mind and in addition to the projects already underway, here is my short-list:

- Engage interested PTAs to join our CMH SIG Liaison leadership groups.
- Engage interested Liaisons to become our CMH SIG representatives to organizations outside APTA once the BOD has determined the protocol and scope for forming such professional alliances
- Engage interested AGPT State Advocates to help us promote our mission within each State.
- Identify and develop collaborative projects that fit within the AGPT’s Strategic Plan and are based on CMH SIG leadership and membership feedback.

In closing, I would like to share with you a quote, attributed to Robby Gilbert, that sums up my observations of our collaborative CMH SIG Leadership efforts to date: “Working together works!”
Many congratulations to our fellow CMH SIG colleagues on their recent honors from the Academy of Geriatric Physical Therapy!

**Margaret Danolovich, PT, DPT, PhD, GCS** - $40,000 Grant Recipient

**Nicole Dawson, PT, PhD, GCS** - Distinguished Educator Award
**ABSTRACT**

**Background and Purpose:** Individuals with dementia (IWDs) experience difficulties across cognitive and functional domains. Nonpharmacological interventions aimed at reducing disability are greatly needed. Exercise is a low-cost and easily implemented approach, but investigation has yielded mixed evidence to date. The purpose of the current study was to evaluate a novel and innovative moderate-intensity functional exercise intervention for IWDs, which was developed using principles from exercise science along with a Strength-Based Approach, consisting of 24 home-based sessions.

**Methods:** A randomized, controlled Intervention trial with a 2-group pretest and posttest design was used with a sample of 23 community-dwelling IWDs (intervention group: n = 13; comparison group: n = 10). Average age of participants was 73.9 years (standard deviation, 9.1) with mild to moderate cognitive impairment (Mini-Mental State Examination, Mean = 20.8; standard deviation, 5.0).

**Results and Discussion:** A 99.0% attendance rate indicated high adherence to the moderate-intensity exercise program. Efficacy was examined using multiple linear regression. Group assignment significantly predicted performance in key outcome measures, with IWDs from the intervention group improving in lower extremity strength (B = 5.92, t = 3.26, P = .004), balance (B = 4.04, t = 4.13, P = .001), and fast gait speed (B = .32, t = 2.61, P = .02). These findings indicated IWDs are able to participate in and benefit from a moderate-intensity functional exercise program, consisting of strength and balance activities.

**Conclusions:** The current intervention used a Strength-Based Approach to facilitate implementation of exercise activities that could be completed by the sample. Therefore, integration of these techniques into mainstream clinical practice and research should be feasible with this patient population. Future research directions and implications of these findings also are discussed.

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Have you tried utilizing implicit memory motor learning techniques in your clinical practice?

Errorless learning is based on implicit learning principles of high repetition and low task variability with practice conditions that minimize errors in performance. Techniques include feed-forward instruction, modeling, physical assistance, modifying task variables, and spaced retrieval.


*Dr. White is an active CMH SIG member and serves as an academic liaison.

*Academic Liaisons Laura White, PT, DSc, GCS and Nicole Dawson, PT, PhD, GCS presented at CSM 2017 on a variety of errorless learning techniques for implementation into clinical practice for individuals with cognitive impairment.

**Inter-Section Journal Club**

- Inter-Section Journal Club will be on March 21st at 7:30-8:30 PM EST.
- Article for discussion: Relationship of Sit-to-Stand Lower-Body Power With Functional Fitness Measures Among Older Adults With and Without Sarcopenia.
- Article: [http://journals.lww.com/jgpt/pages/default.aspx](http://journals.lww.com/jgpt/pages/default.aspx)
- PowerPoint: [https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B4BSp6ZDrNaQX1i0RnFQNY2hsY3M](https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B4BSp6ZDrNaQX1i0RnFQNY2hsY3M)
I live in Simsbury, CT which is a small town just outside Hartford. My workplace is McLean Health Center which is a non-profit organization that offers a continuum of care with outpatient rehab, assisted living, skilled nursing, post acute, hospice and home care. I’ve been there for 25 years, originally doing outpatient PT and then tried home care about 15 years ago and never looked back. I got my Bachelor of Science from the University of Connecticut in 1975 so I have been working for almost 42 years and I still love it. I tried being a supervisor for about 5 years but I really missed working with clients so I returned to clinical work. In my 50’s I decided to go for the DPT online through Des Moines University, which was a great decision—it really broadened my outlook on health and wellness and taught me about evidence based practice which was not in the forefront at all when I got my BS. While I was pursuing the DPT, I was working full time and it was increasingly evident that many clients I was seeing for orthopedic or other issues also had undiagnosed cognitive changes, and no one really knew how to manage them. That led me to do my capstone project on the role of physical therapy in dementia care, and since then I’ve been lucky to work with so many wonderful clients who have taught me so much about what works and what does not. Using cognitive screening tools has been a huge help to me in setting goals and also having the language to communicate with physicians and other members of the team. I’m an adjunct at University of Hartford in a lab class that’s part of the DPT geriatric course - I love working with so many smart and talented students. I’m so excited for the future of our profession.

Fun Facts: I have triplet sons and another son who is older, I loved having 4 sons and now I have 2 great daughters-in-law. My husband and I like outdoor activities - hiking, biking, walking, kayaking. Besides New England, my favorite place is the Pacific Northwest, I would live there but I’d miss my 2 grandkids in Boston too much. I love going to the gym for Zumba (even though I am terribly uncoordinated) and spinning class (except the sweating part). I love the Beatles and I love that I’m am old enough to have gotten to see them in person on their last US tour in 1966. I love throwing parties, making Italian food, the Red Sox, popcorn, ice cream and anything chocolate.

* Dr. Miles recently presented in the CSM 2017 pre-conference course. She currently serves as a Clinical Liaison for the CMH SIG.
**HIPPOCAMPAL HIGHLIGHTS**

Interested in presenting at CSM 2018 in New Orleans, LA?

Proposals are due March 17, 2017

**Upcoming Conferences:**

North American Dementia Conference
Re-imagine Life with Dementia
June 2017 - Atlanta, Georgia
https://daanow.org/north-american-dementia-conference-technology-showcase/

American Geriatrics Society Conference
May 2018 - Orlando, Florida
http://www.americangeriatrics.org/annual_meeting/2017_annual_meeting/pandf_meetings/

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**CONFERENCE UPDATES**

**Highlights from CSM 2017**

First CMH SIG Pre-conference Course was a success!

- About 30 people attend the 2 day course
- Many attendees became SIG members and helped us increase SIG outreach
- Course title: “Working with Individuals with Cognitive / Mental Health Issues Across the Care Continuum”
- Speakers:
  - Laura White, PT, PhD
  - Nicole Dawson, PT, PhD, GCS
  - Betsy Ross, PT, DPT
  - Michele Stanley, PT, DPT, GCS, CEEAA
  - Missy Criss, PT, DPT, GCS
  - Grace Knott, PT, GCS
  - Jean Miles, PT, DPT
  - Lynn Steffes, PT, DPT
  - Christy Ross, PT, DPT, GCS, CDP, MSCS

**CSM 2018 in New Orleans, LA: Proposal link**

- A Reminder from Sarah Ross and Mariana Wingood, AGPT Programming Co-Chairs: “...Start brainstorming and planning now. Help us make the AGPT programming in 2018 the best yet!”
- Submission deadline is March 17, 2017.
Cognitive and Mental Health Special Interest Group Webpage

On our wonderful webpage you will find...

- Past SIG Meeting Minutes
- “A” Club Documents
  - Functional Assessment Staging Tool
  - PAINAD
  - Mini-Cog
- Research Resources
- SIG Links of Interest
- Geriatric State Advocate Information
- Website: https://geriatricspt.org/special-interest-groups/cognitive-mental-health/

We would love to hear about your good news, too!

To be included in the next edition of The Brainiac, please send your information to Christy Ross at:

RossC5@ccf.org