



October FAL Call Minutes

October 29, 2025, 8:00 PM ET

The Zoom recording can be accessed here: <https://apta-org.zoom.us/rec/share/xLWJdxRbZH9ejL5YqEOCWkqJvwNIkLaH-O-R96sgfWbkf5u8m54mRSZzzwsY0WQ.VPzu0jRTQ-uZCBL?startTime=1761782444000>

Congressional Update

Government Shutdown and Appropriations: The federal government shutdown has reached its fourth week, with no deal in sight. Key pressure points include missed paychecks for air traffic controllers, the expiration of SNAP benefits for over 41 million Americans, and the start of ACA Marketplace open enrollment with rising premiums. A new continuing resolution (CR) will be needed before the current one expires on November 21, and it's unclear whether Congress will pass a short- or long-term measure.

Education Department Workforce Reductions and IDEA Programs: The reductions in force within the Department of Education that have gutted the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS). This has created significant disruption in administering the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) programs, leaving states uncertain about continued implementation and compliance.

Federal Student Loan Caps: Department of Education rulemaking around federal student loan caps, which could disadvantage non-physician healthcare providers. APTA and other professional organizations are advocating for equitable treatment and are engaging congressional champions as negotiations continue.

National Health Service Corps Legislation (H.R. 5621): The Physical Therapist Workforce and Patient Access Act (H.R. 5621) was recently reintroduced. The bill would add PTs to the National Health Service Corps Loan Repayment Program and allow community health centers to employ and bill for PT services. The measure has bipartisan support from senior House Energy and Commerce Committee members and key endorsements from major rural health organizations.

Telehealth Flexibilities and Legislation (H.R. 1614): Medicare telehealth flexibilities expired October 1, but Congress may extend them temporarily through a continuing resolution. APTA continues to advocate for permanent authorization of PTs, PTAs, OTs, and SLPs as telehealth providers under H.R. 1614. Members were encouraged to contact Congress through APTA's Patient Action Center.

Grassroots Update

APTA Capitol Hill Day 2026: Planning has begun for APTA Capitol Hill Day 2026, which will take place in April in Washington, D.C., at the Hilton Capitol Hill. The event will include a full day of advocacy training and sessions. Funding will prioritize key contacts in critical congressional districts, while FALs will next receive funded attendance in 2027. Registration will open in early 2026.

FAL Appointments for 2026: FAL appointments for 2026 must be completed by December 19. Appointments are made by component leadership and must be confirmed through APTA's centralized system. Components are urged not to delay until CSM to finalize selections.

2026 FAL Call Schedule: Next year's FAL meetings will continue on the last Wednesday of each month, except for November and December due to holidays. The schedule will be distributed to all FALs at the start of the year.

APTA Honors and Awards: Nominations are encouraged for the Federal Government Affairs Leadership Award and other APTA honors. **The deadline for all award submissions is December 1.** Nominations require an application, CV, and letters of support from APTA members; staff cannot assist with submissions. [A link to the submission form is available here.](#) **No late submissions will be accepted.**

Regulatory Update

Medicare Claims Processing During Shutdown: CMS directed MACs to process claims as normal except those tied to expired telehealth provisions; providers may consider obtaining ABNs and holding non-payable claims pending congressional action. A brief Oct. 15 CMS message to hold all PFS claims was rescinded the same day; by Oct. 21 MACs were instructed to lift holds and process telehealth claims definitively identified as behavioral/mental health. Payments are flowing with some staggered release as MACs clear backlogs; **report persistent non-payment (e.g., Palmetto) to APTA.**

GPCI Work Floor Lapse: The GPCI work floor of 1.00 lapsed, modestly lowering PFS reimbursement (\approx 1–2%) in certain rural/low-cost areas until extended. Providers in affected states may notice slightly reduced payments. Members should monitor remittances and flag anomalies.

Federal Workforce Impacts and Suspended CMS Activities: Approx. 1,000 HHS staff received RIF notices (after some rescissions), with larger proportional losses at Education (e.g., OSERS) and reported CDC impacts. Some CMS oversight/survey/certification/education functions are curtailed, though staff have been recalled to work on final rules (home health and PFS). Final rules must be released by year-end, timeline still uncertain.

November Regulatory Webinar Timing: The November regulatory webinar will likely be delayed until the Medicare PFS final rule is released (also covers home health and other updates). Members should register now to receive the updated date when the rule posts. Email notification will go out upon rescheduling.

PTPAC Update

Elections, Redistricting, and Payment Priority: Despite the shutdown, members of Congress continue campaign fundraising, and redistricting is increasing race competitiveness. With payment a top APTA priority (via HOD/NARC), PAC support is critical to build relationships and advance legislation. Currently ~4% of APTA members give to PTPAC; increased participation is needed to move the needle on payment reforms.

The next FAL call will be Wednesday, November 19 at 8:00 p.m. ET. Please note it is moved up a week due to Thanksgiving.