

ACADEMY OF PEDIATRIC PHYSICAL THERAPY

RESOURCE

FAQ: Pediatric Physical Therapy Outcomes Registry

What Is It?

The Physical Therapy Outcomes Registry (PTOR) supports the vision of the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) and the Academy of Pediatric Physical Therapy (APPT) for the physical therapy profession to “transform society by optimizing movement to improve the human experience (for all children, adults with developmental disabilities, and their families).” A powerful tool to assess the quality and value of physical therapist services, PTOR will assist the profession in its pursuit of the “triple aim” of health care: improving population health, improving the patient’s experience, and lowering costs.

PTOR collects and aggregates participating practices’ electronic health record (EHR) data on patient function and other clinically important measures for patients receiving physical therapist services to inform practice, fulfill quality reporting requirements, promote research, and inform future payment for physical therapist services. PTOR will contain modules specific to conditions for both adult and pediatric practice areas, building on the recommendations of clinical practice guidelines. Specific to pediatric practice, congenital muscular torticollis will be the first pediatric condition for which data will be aggregated.

Goals of PTOR:

- Elevate patient care through data-informed clinical decision making
- Demonstrate the value of physical therapist services
- Promote health services research
- Use data to guide payment policies
- Determine clinical practice patterns and assess adherence to clinical practice guidelines
- Support quality improvement initiatives

How It Works

PTOR employs a sophisticated information technology infrastructure that powers more than 15 national association registries with the understanding that clinicians want to spend time with their patients—not enter data into yet another computer system. PTOR connects seamlessly with multiple third-party electronic hospital record (EHR) systems to securely transfer data to a consolidated database of patient data. By harvesting data from multiple clinical sites, each episode of care quickly contributes to building a large and powerful data set. After initial enrollment by the practice, little to no manual data entry is required.

After enrollment through APTA is complete, your practice will be provided with software with read-only credentials that will integrate with your EHR's functionality. This will facilitate the transfer of data from your EHR into the PTOR. The software installation will require little to no extra work on the part of the practice—all of the technical work is handled by a Registry Client Account Manager.

Once the software is installed, the extraction of data will have minimal impact on your practice's day-to-day activities. Over a 2- to 3-month period, your Client Account Manager will monitor your data flow and organize regular calls with your practice manager to review your data and explain the PTOR dashboard and reports functions. This dashboard is the key to querying and visualizing your practice performance. Queries can be run on your own patient population, practice benchmarks, and areas that can be focused on for quality improvement purposes. Results can also be compared to the larger aggregated dataset.

Practice Benefits

Why should my organization participate in PTOR?

Participation in PTOR can help you elevate patient care through data-informed clinical decision making and help you visualize the value of your care with easy-to-use reporting tools. Joining PTOR also can help you maximize payment potential, demonstrate the value of physical therapist services, and seize opportunities to participate in collaborative care. PTOR also is a participant of the National Quality Research Network (NQRN).

How can I use PTOR to improve my practice?

PTOR allows you to run high-quality reports that provide clinician-, practice-, and national-level results for all outcome measures reported through the system. This information can aid in clinical decision making, quality improvement initiatives, and resource allocation.

How is population management via PTOR different than via my EHR?

You'll be able to monitor patient care, track interventions, and evaluate outcomes for congenital muscular torticollis (CMT), and eventually for other specific conditions addressed in PTOR. The report run time is much quicker than that of an EHR, whose reporting functions can be cumbersome to use. Additionally, the reports provide information about your own clinical practice setting in the context of other practices, allowing benchmarking for quality improvement.

How is the PTOR unique?

PTOR allows you to track patients across multiple episodes of care; access nonproprietary, CMS-supported outcomes measures, in addition to vendor-specific measures; and treat children with CMT according to clinical practice guidelines using body region/disease-specific treatment and outcome modules. It is the only registry designed and populated specifically to track physical therapy practice.

Will it create more work for staff?

No! Data will be extracted automatically from your EHR and transmitted directly to PTOR, which will be integrated with most major EHR products.

My practice doesn't use an EHR. Can I still participate?

Yes! There are mechanisms to input data manually without using an EHR, although the system works best in association with one.

How does PTOR protect patient data?

Personal health information and identifiable provider information will be captured and stored in accordance with all federal and state laws and regulations. Patient-specific data is available only to the practice. All data transfers use encryption technology.

Who can enroll?

PTOR participation is open to US-based licensed physical therapists with a National Provider Identifier (NPI). Participation is handled at the clinic level. (If you are an individual physical therapist and want to participate, please contact your clinic administrator.) Not all physical therapists in a practice must participate, but full participation will generate data that most accurately reflects practice performance.

The Academy of Pediatric Physical Therapy is sponsoring enrollment for one year for physical therapists who are members of APPT. The goal of the sponsored enrollment is to gather information about practice patterns for infants with congenital muscular torticollis. To be considered for a sponsored enrollment, please fill out an application available at: <http://pediatricapta.org/news/index.cfm#n2276>.

Is the PTOR accredited?

The PTOR platform is fully accredited by the Electronic Healthcare Network Accreditation Commission (EHNAC) and is certified by the ONC (Office of the National Coordinator) Health IT Certification program as a Certified Health Information Technology product.

What if I have more questions?

For more information about how PTOR works and how it can benefit you, please contact registry@apta.org or the APPT Practice Committee Chair (www.pediatricapta.org under About Us).

Reference

1. APTA Physical Therapy Outcomes Database website: <http://www.ptoutcomes.com/Home.aspx>. Accessed 4/25/2017

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