

**PTA PROGRAM 8th ANNUAL CLINICIAN APPRECIATION DAY**  
SPEAKER BIOS, SESSION DESCRIPTIONS & OBJECTIVES

**639 skeletal muscles in the body, why are we ignoring a few?**

**Theresa M. Feola PT, WCS, PRPC**

Ms. Feola earned a Bachelor's of Science in Physical Therapy degree from the University of Pittsburg. Ms. Feola is a board-certified Women's Certified Specialist (WCS). She earned Pelvic Rehabilitation Practitioner Certification (PRPC) from the Herman and Wallace Rehabilitation Institute in 2015. Ms. Feola has more than twenty-five years of clinical practice experience spanning inpatient acute care, inpatient rehabilitation, skilled nursing and outpatient orthopedics. She has served in clinical management roles throughout her career, but her clinical focus has been on the education and treatment of pre-natal, post-natal, incontinence and women's and men's pelvic floor related impairments. Her clinical practice prioritizes accurate diagnosis and treatment of pelvic floor impairments with the primary goal of maximizing function and quality of life for her patients. She is the owner and primary physical therapist at The Pelvic Room. Ms. Feola is a member of the APTA Women's Health section, the Philadelphia Pelvic PT Alliance and the West Chester Women's multi-sport club. She presents regionally to community groups and regional healthcare providers on women's health topics. She is a guest contributor to the Pelvic P.T. Rising podcast. Ms. Feola has lectured at West Chester University (Women's Health course). She is a contributing author and webinar guest for Femme Pharma and Hershey's Mill Digest. She is the co-founder of Perinatal Partners Network, an organization focused on providing resources for women's healthcare practitioners.

**Course Description:**

Healthcare practitioners recognize the importance of holistic care and the interconnectedness of the human body, but the pelvic floor musculature is often overlooked. This 3-hour session will provide participants with clinically relevant information to enhance clinical practice/skills across the continuum of care, regardless of the clinical practice setting. The presenter will highlight the benefits of addressing pelvic floor function to promote improved patient care and outcomes, while acknowledging and providing practical tips to address the embarrassment and uncertainty that is often associated with pelvic floor related impairments and treatment.

This course will educate physical therapists and physical therapist assistants about evidence based treatment recommendations for patients presenting to physical therapy with pelvic floor dysfunction. The instructor will review the common presentations, impairments and implications for treatment associated with pelvic floor dysfunction, while highlighting screening techniques for pelvic floor related issues. The instructor will describe the relevance and benefits of incorporating patient education and breathing exercises that support appropriate pelvic floor muscle activation for patients across the continuum of care. Attendees will learn about the benefits of managing pelvic floor dysfunction using a comprehensive approach. The instructor will introduce principles of trauma-based care and will discuss practical treatment techniques to maximize treatment outcomes while respecting individual/ sensitive patient presentations. Attendees will review indications for appropriate medical or specialist referral. Attendees will leave this session with practical implementation tips to address core and respiratory muscle activation/engagement that will support pelvic floor interventions.

**Objectives:**

The participants will be able to:

- List the 4 functions of the pelvic floor
- Identify factors that indicate the need for patient referral for pelvic floor physical therapy
- Describe the potential relationship between trauma and pelvic floor dysfunction and recognize the therapist/assistant's role in avoiding further inadvertent medical trauma
- List the reasons why integrative care is especially important when treating persons with pelvic floor dysfunction
- Identify signs and symptoms that are consistent with male pelvic floor dysfunction
- Discuss common myths and the inappropriate normalization of women's complaints (relative to pelvic floor functions) that often occurs

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- Describe external cues that will promote proper core engagement during therapeutic exercises
- Identify the effects of respiratory patterns/breath work on the autonomic nervous system and the pelvic floor