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Physical Therapist Management of Patients With Suspected or Confirmed Osteoporosis: A Clinical Practice Guideline

A clinical practice guideline on physical therapist management of patients with suspected or confirmed osteoporosis was developed by a volunteer guideline development group (GDG) that was appointed by the Academy of Geriatric Physical Therapy (APTA Geriatrics). The GDG consisted of an exercise physiologist and 6 physical therapists with clinical and methodological expertise. The guideline was based on a systematic review of existing clinical practice guidelines, followed by application of the ADAPTE methodological process described by Guidelines International Network for adapting guidelines for cultural and professional utility. The recommendations contained in this guideline are derived from the 2021 Scottish Intercollegiate Guideline Network (SIGN) document: Management of Osteoporosis and the Prevention of Fragility Fractures. These guidelines are intended to assist physical therapists practicing in the United States, and implementation in the context of the US health care system is discussed.

Keywords: osteoporosis, clinical practice guideline, physical therapy, rehabilitation, prevention, case management

Biography

Dr. Nithman is a licensed physical therapist in the United States and currently serves as the Dean of Physical Therapy Education at the Center for Graduate Studies at West Coast University in Los Angeles, California. He holds degrees from Duquesne University (BS, MPT), Chatham University (DPT), and Nova Southeastern University (PhD). Additionally, Dr. Nithman is Board Certified as a Geriatric Clinical Specialist (GCS) by the American Board of Physical Therapy Specialties.

With over 40 peer-reviewed scholarly publications, his recent work focuses on a Clinical Practice Guidance Statement and a Delphi consensus-based document for physical therapists managing patients with low bone mass. He has also researched topics including remote fall risk screening, value-based healthcare, the CDC's STEADI algorithm, and telerehabilitation.

Dr. Nithman has shared his expertise with national and international audiences, presenting on subjects such as telerehabilitation, fall screening and prevention, interprofessional rehabilitation, business entity selection, high-fidelity simulation, technology in home healthcare, case management in prospective payment systems, predictive validity of admissions interviews, and critical thinking. Drawing on his experience in business start-ups, interprofessional practice management, consulting, formal post-professional education, and over 25 years of experience in healthcare, his teaching focus includes outcomes management, interprofessional education and practice management, healthcare policy, law and ethics, reimbursement systems (including value-based healthcare), geriatric rehabilitation, and health and wellness for older adults, with an emphasis on fall screening and prevention.

Dr. Nithman's expertise in Prospective Payment Systems (PPS) and in-home assessment and reimbursement procedures is underscored by his certification as an Outcome and Assessment Information Set (OASIS) Specialist (COS-C), which he held from 2005 to 2021. He has consulted for organizations such as the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, and Harvard Medical School, in addition to numerous private healthcare businesses.

