



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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APTQI Applauds Introduction of the SAFE Act in the U.S. Senate

Older Americans and the physical therapists who treat them support this much-needed bill for expanding patients' access to fall-prevention services

Washington, D.C. – The Alliance for Physical Therapy Quality and Innovation (APTQI) today applauded the introduction of the Stopping Addiction and Falls for the Elderly (SAFE) Act ([S. 2612](#)) in the U.S. Senate. **Introduced by Senator Jim Justice (R-WV), S. 2612 mirrors bipartisan companion legislation ([H.R. 1171](#)) introduced in the U.S. House in February by Representatives Carol Miller (R-WV) and Melanie Stansbury (D-NM).**

As the leading cause of injuries and injury-related deaths among older Americans, falls present a serious and growing health concern. Falls often lead to prolonged pain, broken bones, hospitalizations, and even death. Falls are not only harmful to patients, they are also a significant financial burden on the healthcare system, and, [according to the CDC](#), annual costs associated with falls are projected to rise to \$100 billion a year by 2030.

Thankfully, with the right interventions, falls are preventable. If passed, the SAFE Act would allow Medicare beneficiaries to receive a no-cost falls risk assessment from a physical or occupational therapist—the *falls experts*—as part of their annual wellness visit.

“Every day, our practices see older patients whose lives have been turned upside down by falls that could have been prevented. I applaud Senator Justice for sponsoring the SAFE Act in the U.S. Senate, which recognizes the vital role physical and occupational therapists play in fall prevention and expands patient access to preventative care before injuries strike,” **said Simon Hargus, PT, DPT, OCS, MBA, owner of [First Settlement Physical Therapy](#), which operates 30 physical and occupational therapy clinics across West Virginia.** Including a no-cost falls risk assessment as part of the Medicare Annual Wellness Visit will allow our therapists to address falls risks while also reducing downstream healthcare costs.”

“The introduction of the SAFE Act in the U.S. Senate marks an important step towards improving patient access to physical and occupational therapy and protecting older Americans nationwide from preventable falls. This legislation will allow our older population to access essential preventative care with no out-of-pocket costs—all while enabling

improved independence, wellbeing, and quality of life,” said **Nikesh Patel, PT, Executive Director of APTQI.**

With 87% of older Americans in support of the SAFE Act, according to a [Morning Consult survey](#), there is no question that legislators across the country should support—and work to swiftly pass—the SAFE Act.

The SAFE Act is supported by the [AARP](#), American Physical Therapy Association (APTA), American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA), National Association of Rehab Providers & Agencies (NARA), and other patient and professional organizations.

“We look forward to working with our colleagues across the professional and patient communities to increase interest in this important legislation,” **Patel added.** “Growing support in both the Senate and the House signals it is time for Congress to act and pass the SAFE Act.”

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About Alliance for Physical Therapy Quality and Innovation (APTQI)

The Alliance for Physical Therapy Quality and Innovation (APTQI) unites small, medium, and large physical therapy practices to advocate for the physical therapy profession in the areas of payment reform, quality initiatives, outcomes, and innovation projects. We are an aligned group of therapists and practices who share a common vision for the future of our profession. Our goal is to establish physical therapy as the treatment of choice and the best value for patients and payers. Learn more at aptqi.com.

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