



2017-2022

# STRATEGIC VISION

Transforming Health Care



# WE ARE LEADERS SHAPING THE FUTURE OF HEALTH CARE.

**The USC Strategic Vision** calls for the university community to “address global challenges, spark creativity, invent and innovate, connect peoples and help improve the quality of life.” The USC Division of Biokinesiology and Physical Therapy intends to play a leading role in these ambitious endeavors. The objectives that we strive to achieve will require us to harness our strengths, continue to achieve excellence and be leaders in shaping the future of health care. We are committed to continuous learning and transformation to accomplish our mission: to enhance human health and quality of life.

We live in an era of unprecedented opportunities and extraordinary challenges. Advances in science and technology, especially in the areas of communications and information processing, are transforming society. Medical science also has made enormous strides. Yet health care models have failed to adequately deliver these scientific advances across societies. The fundamental problem of how to provide quality health care to all people dominates policy discussions related to social structure, economics, upward mobility, diversity, democracy, human rights and, indeed, what we value as a society. Further, as the National Academy of Medicine points out, “Professional education has not kept pace with these challenges, largely because of fragmented, outdated and static curricula.” Accordingly, we must transform how we prepare the next generation of physical therapists to deliver the highest level of care to society.

The USC Division of Biokinesiology and Physical Therapy has spent the last three decades creating a unique and powerful community of faculty, students, staff, patients and other partners to answer this challenge. Our excellence derives from our combined strength in research, education and clinical service. We are uniquely positioned to develop innovative solutions that integrate across these three domains. By leveraging our strengths in each of these areas, we can create new value for students, patients and society.

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# OUR VISION

To transform health care by creating the future in physical therapy.

# OUR MISSION

To enhance the health and quality of life of all people by advancing physical therapy education, science and practice.

# OUR OBJECTIVES

- 1** Transform education to meet societal needs.
- 2** Develop leaders for a rapidly changing health care system.
- 3** Integrate research and practice to advance science and human health.
- 4** Influence local and global communities of practice.





## KEY THEMES

Our pursuit of these strategic objectives will focus on key themes that characterize our strengths and passions as a community:

### **Movement**

Human health and quality of life across the lifespan depend on the ability to move skillfully and efficiently. We strive to advance the scientific understanding of the extraordinarily complex phenomenon of human movement and to develop innovative movement-related interventions that enhance functional capacity and improve performance.

### **Technology**

Advances in technology have transformed life in the 21st century, profoundly impacting how we access information, interact with our communities, make discoveries and meet the fundamental needs of society. We embrace the use of technology in education, research and practice. By developing and integrating new technologies we leverage the power of these innovations to better meet the needs of students, patients, the profession and society.

### **Value**

In health care practice and research, emphasis on value has shifted the paradigm from payment for services to payment for outcomes while providing an excellent patient experience. This requires innovative delivery models that redefine the role of physical therapists. Further, innovative educational models provide value by preparing graduates to be expert practitioners in a dynamic health care environment.

### **Translation**

Professional practice requires the translation of theory to action. The ultimate purpose of our activities in research and education is to improve practice. We seek new knowledge and understanding of complex biological and psychosocial mechanisms. We translate knowledge into advances in practice. We disseminate these advances to local and global communities of practice.

### **The Individual**

We are a learning community; we use data to improve the quality of what we do. As we embrace technologies that allow us to analyze vast data sets and to connect with social communities, we recognize that health care and education are most effective, and most humane, when centered on the individual patient or student. To excel as a learning community, we must connect individuals to one another and to the world.

### **Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Anti-Racism**

We recognize that we cannot excel in the practice of physical therapy while ignoring the racism that permeates the system in which we practice. We continually work to enhance our curriculum, transform our practice and broaden our research agenda in order to be a positive force for change throughout our diverse communities. We foster diversity in the recruitment and retention of our students, staff and faculty and strive to provide an inclusive, anti-racist environment where all members of the community are valued and feel welcomed. We aim to use our clinical knowledge, our scholarly work and our influence within the national physical therapy profession to promote population health equity.



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# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Based on the objectives and themes that we have identified, we choose the following as our strategic priorities for the next five years:

## Transforming Education to Meet Societal Needs

- » Initiate the process of transforming DPT education by developing a hybrid (online/on-campus) DPT program using innovative curricular approaches and enhancing access to professional education.
- » Broaden the scope of our educational offerings and research enterprise by developing a new concentration in Sports Science for the MS in Biokinesiology.
- » Build a research focus on educational methodology in order to improve our own programs and to contribute to professional education.
- » Enhance BKN and DPT curricula to strengthen and prioritize a health justice perspective.

## Developing Leaders for a Rapidly Changing Health Care System

- » Positively impact population health by redefining the role of the physical therapist as an essential primary care provider across the lifespan.
- » Promote clinical excellence through progressive, evidence-based post-professional education offerings, including residency and fellowship programs.
- » Institute a faculty development program that provides mentorship, training and support to advance teaching and social justice across all faculty.
- » Initiate pipeline programs to educate and expose students of racial and ethnic minority groups about physical therapy and movement science research professions.
- » Enhance recruiting and retention strategies to increase enrollment and successful program completion of students of minoritized racial and ethnic groups.
- » Increase the value of our educational programs by raising funds to offset student costs through scholarships, fellowships and grants.
- » Enhance the sustainability of physical therapy science by recruiting more physical therapists into the PhD in biokinesiology program.

## Integrating Research and Practice to Advance Science and Human Health

- » Develop collaborations inside and outside of USC to create interdisciplinary centers of excellence that will address major societal health problems, including:
  - Chronic non-communicable diseases (especially cancer, obesity and diabetes, developmental disability and neurodegenerative disease)
  - Long-term disability resulting from both adult and perinatal stroke
  - Chronic pain leading to disability and opioid abuse
- » Create a Division-wide research center with a focus on the study of movement and exercise to promote health and treat disease.

## Influencing Local and Global Communities of Practice

- » Build a more racially and ethnically diverse community of faculty, students and staff with varied perspectives and lived experiences to help inform our understanding of the collective human experience.
- » Create an educational and work environment that is supportive, protective and inclusive.
- » Improve access to high-quality physical therapy at USC and in the community by developing sustainable, accessible, inclusive, interprofessional, person-centered clinical services.
- » Expand global reach by developing post-professional education offerings for international markets.
- » Develop collaborations with community-centered health care organizations.

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