

Atul T. Patel, MD, MHSA, FAAPMR

Your Practice

My current practice reflects a combination of community needs, personal interests, and professional opportunities. Over the years, my experience has been diverse, including roles as a faculty member in the Department of Rehabilitation Medicine at the University of Kansas Medical Center, residency program director, medical director of an inpatient rehabilitation facility, and now as a private practitioner within an orthopedic group.

I have built a comprehensive practice that encompasses outpatient follow-up for patients with neurological conditions, diagnosis and rehabilitation management of neuromuscular disorders, and electrodiagnostic studies in both adults and children. In addition, I evaluate and treat patients with movement disorders, manage headache care, and conduct clinical research in these areas.

Your life outside of work

I enjoy traveling, meeting new people, experiencing different cultures, and trying unique foods while discovering new places. I have been fortunate to share these experiences both with my family and through my work. I value time with family and friends, and as my children begin their own careers, I look forward to rekindling my interests in gardening and wildlife. I also enjoy playing tennis (and pickleball) and spending time in nature on long walks.

What accomplishments/honors are you particularly proud of that you would like to share with members?

I am proud of the many opportunities I have had to contribute throughout my career. I have been privileged to care for patients, to teach and mentor learners at all levels, and to continue learning from them in return. I take particular pride in establishing a practice model that integrates the strengths of private practice with the academic pursuits I value most—teaching, research, national engagement, and presentations at both national and international meetings. I am also honored to serve as Vice President of my orthopedic group and as a member of the AAPM&R Board, where I work alongside exceptionally dedicated and talented colleagues to advance our field.

What have you advanced in your local community outside of or in conjunction with your medical practice?

a. Education and Awareness

Through lectures, seminars, and one-on-one interactions delivered consistently over several years, I have worked to raise awareness of PM&R and expand knowledge across multiple groups, including:

- Physical therapists, occupational therapists, nurses, and other ancillary providers
- Primary care physicians, other physician specialists, and advanced practice providers

b. Clinical Practice

In my private outpatient practice, I provide comprehensive neurorehabilitation care and the full

spectrum of spasticity management. I also perform the majority of pediatric electrodiagnostic testing for the surrounding Midwest region.

c. Professional Education

I continue to educate physiatrists and neurologists in my community who are interested in the management of spasticity and movement disorders.

d. Leadership and Service

I serve on the boards of the Rehabilitation Institute Foundation and the Falling Forward Foundation, both based in Kansas City.

e. International Collaboration

In partnership with the Kansas City Sister City program, I helped establish and secure funding for a program enabling PM&R residents from the University of Guadalajara, Mexico, to participate in a two-week clinical and educational exchange in Kansas City with me and other medical institutions.

What special skills or unique attributes do you bring to the Board of Governors?

I bring a broad range of experience across nearly every setting in physiatry—academic and private practice, inpatient and outpatient care, clinical and research, and across the lifespan—that has shaped both my perspective and my priorities for the field. Having led programs in academics, built successful practices in private medicine, advanced research initiatives, and served in leadership roles within the AAPM&R, I understand the diverse needs of our specialty and the opportunities ahead. My vision is to continue strengthening the Academy as the unified voice for physiatrists, expanding our role in an evolving healthcare landscape, fostering collaboration across disciplines, and ensuring that future generations of physiatrists are equipped to thrive as leaders in patient care, education, research, and advocacy.

What have we not asked you that you think members should know about you?

Why am I pursuing this at this stage of my career?

I am deeply committed to our specialty and the need for a unified voice to navigate today's challenges and shape the future of physiatry. As a small specialty, our strength lies in coming together, and I am eager to contribute my experience and energy to that effort. Having been a member of the Academy since medical school, I am now ready to dedicate the time and leadership needed to advance our field and represent our profession effectively.