

Keeping up with the “Digital Natives”: Using Technology in the Clinical Environment

If you were raised during a time when telephones were “dialed”, and research was done using World Book encyclopedias, then you should consider yourself a “Digital Immigrant” (a term coined by Marc Prensky about 10 years ago). Today’s students, on the other hand, are “Digital Natives”, having grown up with cell phones, Google searching and YouTube. While college didactic (classroom) curriculum is evolving to bridge this gap with the use of online courses, podcasts, blogs/social media, etc, the applications for use of technology in clinical education has been less explored. Consider working with your students to try some of these new resources in the clinical environment:



Apps

Apps for iPhone/iPad and Android devices are now available for just about every conceivable PT content area. Many of these are free or very inexpensive. Those of particular interest include:

- For anatomy/pathophysiology and reference:
 - Pocket Body
 - Spine (or Knee, Shoulder, etc.) Decide
 - Muscle Trigger Points
 - Nervous System
 - CORE: Clinical Ortho Exam
 - iOrtho
 - Pocket Lab Values
 - Medscape
- For clinical communication, assessment and documentation:
 - Physical Therapy Spanish
 - Goniometer
 - Home Program Rx
 - PT Timer
 - Instant Heart Rate
 - Get my ROM
 - Dartfish (which allows sport-specific biomechanical analysis)
 - Posture Screen

Podcasts

Recorded lectures and debates from specific PT communities are available for free download including topics from:

- APTA
- specific sections of APTA (pediatric, neurology, orthopedic, etc.)
- PT Talker
- various journals including PT Journal, Journal of Bone and Joint Surgery, Journal of Neurologic Physical Therapy, etc.

YouTube

Videos on physical therapy topics, techniques and exercises are out there by the thousands. Some are certainly better (and worse) than others, but a few channels to explore include:

- Physical Therapy Channel
- Christopher Johnson PT
- Tim Richardson PT
- Mike Reinold PT

Websites, Blogs, and RSS Feeds

These are excellent resources. In addition to the APTA (and section-specific) websites, others worth checking out include:

- MyPhysicalTherapySpace.com
- Therapydia.com
- PT Think Tank
- Real PT Blog
- PT Talk: Blogs
- Brigham & Women’s Hospital

Please share information or links to the technologies and resources you’ve found to be useful in the clinic and for clinical instruction!