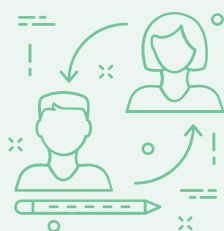


OUTLINING THE

RESHAPING EDUCATION RECOMMENDATIONS

The “Reshaping Athletic Training Education in the 21st Century” document was created in 2021 by the NATA Executive Council for Education to provide a strategic framework for the future of athletic training education. You can read the entire document at www.nata.org/professional-interests/job-settings/higher-education/resources. The following is an outline of the document’s 18 recommendations and the six categories under which they fall.



NATA Collaboration With the AT Strategic Alliance

Collaboration with the AT Strategic Alliance is essential as each organization, though separate, serves specific unique needs of the athletic training profession. As athletic training education continues to change, the collaboration, transparency and support of these organizations will guide the profession.

1. Efficient collaborative communication and action transcending current role delineation of AT Strategic Alliance members related to critical issues and threats facing the profession would better position ATs for success in the future.
2. NATA should establish a process by which continuing education and professional development opportunities continuously offer innovative content and mechanisms of delivery that meet or exceed the standards of professional education and are consistent with contemporary Board of Certification practices.
3. NATA, with support from the AT Strategic Alliance, needs to integrate digital health and health information technology into the practice of athletic training.

Professional Education

Educational reform and emerging research on educational strategies in health professions should be used to assist in the development of professional programs.

4. Clinical education delivery and its effectiveness on clinical skill development should be rigorously examined with model practices identified and disseminated.
5. The sustainability of athletic training programs, including recruitment and retention of qualified athletic training students, should be examined, and strategies for increasing both should be developed.
6. Resources for faculty preparation and development should continue to be expanded upon to ensure faculty and programmatic affiliates, such as preceptors, are supported in their roles.
7. Relationships with external organizations and professions should be fostered to facilitate student and personnel recruitment, retention and interprofessional education and practice.
8. Athletic training students and faculty should create and engage in opportunities to have meaningful interactions with other health care providers and support personnel, including physicians, therapists, dietitians, psychologists, strength and conditioning personnel, case managers, administrators, etc., during clinical education experiences. These interactions will further educate other professions regarding the unique skill set and contributions of ATs to the health care system.
9. There should be purposeful development of professional, interpersonal skills in athletic training students and athletic training professionals that continues to be supported throughout one’s professional career.
10. NATA should continue to support the preceptor development process and provide resources to athletic training programs to enhance clinical education experiences.
11. Model practices for clinical education experiences, including facilities, learning opportunities and onboarding to clinical education should be developed and disseminated.





Transition to Practice

Educational reform and its overarching impact on athletic training educators and clinicians continues to be an area of focus for the profession as new requirements and standards emerge in professional and clinical education. The importance of facilitating a dynamic, yet adaptive expertise environment for all professionals in this evolving landscape will facilitate transition to practice.

12. ATs across all settings can facilitate transition to practice through various socialization mechanisms, including anticipatory and organizational socialization strategies, to promote role evolution and stability.
13. Transition to practice through rigorous onboarding and sustained mentoring for ATs.

Advanced Clinical Practice

Professional development and continuing education are essential for all health care professionals. Specialty certificates allow ATs to demonstrate expertise in a specific domain of athletic training to advance employment opportunities, promote research initiatives and, ultimately, provide increased credibility to the AT skill sets.

14. NATA should continue collaborating with relevant entities regarding the pathways, language and processes surrounding the development of clinical specialists in the profession.
15. Efforts should be made to further educate and empower practicing clinicians to integrate practice-based research into their clinical practice.



Advanced Practice Leadership

Athletic training, as a profession, is experiencing tremendous change – professional and post-professional education, specialty training, employment settings and interprofessional health care, etc. Across the span of their career, ATs need to engage in strong professional leadership and pursue opportunities to promote the profession for viability.

16. Available and emerging pathways for the development of advanced practice leadership should be communicated to athletic training students and practicing clinicians with appropriate resources developed to support these pathways.



Stewards of the Profession

The role of advocacy and stewardship to the profession should be promoted as a professional responsibility at all stages of one's career. Our stewards must identify and disseminate new knowledge specific to and defining athletic training practice to ensure the longevity and growth of the profession.

17. The role of research in the profession, including the development and support of researchers at all stages of their careers, should be evaluated, articulated and promoted.
18. All members of the profession should collaborate to better develop, support and recognize stewards of the discipline. Initiatives including, but not limited to, student engagement, professional advocacy, research promotion, innovative educational models, interprofessional education and practice, legislative efforts and public relations efforts should be continually evaluated and prioritized. §