



The Alliance for Animal Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation STAAR Conference (April 2026)

Founded in 2025, the *Alliance for Animal Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation* brought together an interdisciplinary group of experienced veterinarians, physical therapists, and educators committed to strengthening professional collaborations and advancing education standards across the field. The Alliance held its second annual panel presentation during the STAAR Conference in Parsippany, New Jersey, in April 2026. The aim of the panel presentation was to facilitate ongoing national conversations centered on mindful and responsible leadership within the shared professions of animal physical therapy and veterinary rehabilitation. During the STAAR conference, members of the Alliance emphasized the importance of maintaining open dialogue, fostering transparency, and sharing responsibility in shaping the outlook of animal rehabilitation practice.

Following just one year of formal existence, the Alliance has made significant progress in establishing an organizational identity and articulating a focused direction. An example of achievements includes the development of an initial mission statement, designing a formal logo, and agreeing upon several clearly defined objectives. The group has also initiated meaningful discussions around professional competencies and has reviewed the objectives and curricular content of several nationally recognized certification programs. These efforts were aimed at identifying common ground between veterinarians and physical therapists, while also acknowledging areas of divergence and opportunities for future growth through better alignment of cross-disciplinary agendas.

Alliance members have also shared many hours discussing the future of educational competencies to foster a respected level of practice standards in patient care across professions. To accomplish its mission, the organization has outlined several strategic objectives, including the standardization of terminology, evaluation of postgraduate training models, and synthesis of regulatory language governing scope of practice. By developing a unified understanding of roles, responsibilities, and competencies, the Alliance seeks to create a framework that supports improved clarity for providers of care, state regulators, and public consumers.

To increase its diversity of opinions and perspectives, the Alliance extended an offer during the STAAR conference for credentialed veterinary technicians to apply for membership on the team. An additional member will improve the Alliance's ability to accomplish proposed goals over the next year: publishing a peer-reviewed article and continuing national-level discussions on competencies, legislation, and collaborative care models. The STAAR panel concluded with an interactive discussion with the audience that reinforced the Alliance's commitment to inclusivity, ongoing dialogue, and the advancement of patient-centered outcomes in animal rehabilitation. The Alliance website may be found here: <http://www.theallianceaptr.com/>

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