



Catherine Willis GAICD

Candidate for re-election | APA Member Director
2027 - 2029

Experienced Director. Health-system leader.

Courageous and thoughtful contributor to Board governance.

WHAT I BRING TO THE APA BOARD

- Current APA Board Director 2024 - present
- Endorsed by the APA Board for renomination
- Board representative for the APA's Hospital Strategy
- APA subject matter expert at two Senate inquiries
- Contributed to development of the APA's Towards 2030 strategic plan
- Board sub-committee experience across NRGCC, ARC and ISC
- Demonstrated integrity, independent judgement and courage in governance

WHY I AM ASKING FOR YOUR VOTE

I am seeking a second term because I believe I can now make an even stronger contribution. I bring Board experience, contemporary health-system leadership, governance training, risk and financial oversight experience, policy and advocacy exposure, and a genuine commitment to the future of our profession.

But I also bring something less easily captured in a resume: a willingness to contribute, to listen, to keep learning and, when necessary, to speak up.

I would be honoured to continue serving APA members as a Member Director for 2027-2029.

CONTACT

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GOVERNANCE AND STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

Serving as an **APA Member Director** has been one of the most significant professional responsibilities of my career. During my first term, I have developed a deeper understanding of the role of a non-executive director: the responsibility to think strategically, exercise independent judgement, test assumptions, oversee risk and performance, and always act in the best interests of the Association as a whole.

I have contributed actively to Board discussions and decision-making, including development of the APA's Towards 2030 strategic plan. I currently serve on the Board's Audit and Risk sub-committee and have also served on the Nominations, Remuneration & Governance and the Insurance and Safety Committees. These roles have strengthened my experience in governance, risk, financial oversight and the importance of maintaining a clear distinction between governance and operations.

I have completed the AICD Company Directors Course and hold **GAICD**. I remain committed to continuing to develop as a Director and to improving the quality of the contribution I make around the Board table.

HEALTH-SYSTEM LEADERSHIP

My Board contribution is strengthened by my ongoing leadership within a large and complex public health service.

As a **Team Leader Physiotherapist** at the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital, I have experience in clinical leadership, service development, workforce planning, multidisciplinary collaboration, funding and models of care. I have also undertaken multiple periods as **Acting Deputy Director** of Physiotherapy, broadening my exposure to strategic and operational leadership across a large physiotherapy service.

As **Chair of the RBWH Staff Council**, I represent the perspectives of staff from across the hospital in discussions with the executive team. This role has further developed my understanding of organisational culture, workforce engagement and the importance of meaningful consultation when leading change.

POLICY, ADVOCACY AND CONNECTION TO THE PROFESSION

I am passionate about ensuring physiotherapy has a strong and credible voice in health policy and public debate.

I have represented the APA as a subject matter expert at two Australian Senate inquiries, contributing physiotherapy perspectives to national discussions on birth trauma and menopause. I have also been appointed by the Board as champion for the APA's Hospital Strategy.

These experiences have reinforced my belief that the APA must continue to articulate the value of physiotherapy confidently to governments, funders, consumers and the wider health system.

WHY I AM SEEKING ANOTHER TERM

My first term on the APA Board has challenged me, stretched me and strengthened me.

I have learned that good governance requires more than knowledge. It requires curiosity, judgement, preparation, courage and the willingness to listen carefully to different perspectives. It also requires Directors to be prepared to ask difficult questions, respectfully challenge assumptions, and, equally, reconsider their own views when presented with better evidence.

I value robust discussion and diversity of opinion. I believe some of the strongest Board decisions emerge when Directors feel safe to question, disagree and explore an issue from different perspectives - while remaining respectful, collegiate and focused on the collective responsibility of the Board.

Integrity is particularly important to me. I take seriously the obligations of a Member Director to make decisions in the interests of the APA as a whole rather than any individual sector or group.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2027-2029

Physiotherapy is operating in a rapidly changing environment. Workforce challenges, health-system reform, technological change, artificial intelligence, funding pressures, evolving consumer expectations and changes in how professional associations demonstrate value will all require thoughtful and forward-looking leadership.

I believe the APA has an important role not only in responding to these changes, but in anticipating them.

If re-elected, I will continue contributing to a Board that is curious about the future, prepared to challenge established thinking and ambitious about the role physiotherapy can play in improving the health of Australians.

I also want to continue strengthening the connection between the APA's strategic direction and the diverse environments in which physiotherapists work. The breadth of our profession is one of our greatest strengths; our challenge is to harness that diversity while maintaining a clear collective direction.

SELECTED PROFESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

- B App Sci (Physiotherapy) 1994
- Post Grad Cert Exercise & women's health 2014
- Graduate, AICD Company Directors Course, GAICD 2025
- APA Member Director | 2024–present
- Chair, APA National Advisory Council | 2021–2023
- National Chair, APA WMPH Committee | 2018–2020
- World Physiotherapy Leadership Program 2026
- Senior public-sector physiotherapy team leader, RBWH 2021-present
- Previous Acting Deputy Director of Physiotherapy, RBWH
- Teaching staff member Australian Catholic university 2014-present
- Steering Committee member Birth Trauma Australia
- Chair RBWH Staff Council