

Brief biography

Walter R. Frontera, MD, PhD

Walter R. Frontera, MD, PhD, is Professor in the Departments of Physical Medicine, Rehabilitation, and Sports Medicine (PM&R) and Physiology and Biophysics at the University of Puerto Rico (UPR). Dr. Frontera completed his MD and a residency in PM&R in 1983 at the UPR and a doctoral degree in applied anatomy and physiology at Boston University in 1986. Then, he became Founding Director of the Center for Sports Health and Exercise Sciences at the Olympic Training Center of Puerto Rico. In 1993 he was appointed Inaugural Chair of the Department of PM&R and Sports Medicine at the UPR School of Medicine. In 1995 he spent a sabbatical year at the Karolinska Hospital in Stockholm, Sweden in the Department of Clinical Neurophysiology studying the effects of aging on human skeletal muscle. In 1996 he was recruited to the position of Inaugural Professor and Head of the Department of PM&R at Harvard Medical School and Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital in Boston, MA. From 2006-2011 he served as Dean of the Faculty of Medicine at the UPR and from 2012 to 2017 was Professor and Inaugural Chair of the Department of PM&R at Vanderbilt University School of Medicine.

His main research interest is geriatric rehabilitation and in particular the study of the mechanisms underlying muscle atrophy and weakness in elderly. He has more than 230 scientific publications including 101 peer-reviewed articles and 16 edited books. Currently, Dr. Frontera serves as the Editor-in-Chief of *The American Journal of PM&R*. In 2008 he was elected member of the National Academy of Medicine of the USA. He is the President-elect of the International Society for PM&R and an elected fellow of the American Academy of PM&R, the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), and the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM). Dr. Frontera has presented more than 220 invited lectures in 53 countries and served as a grant reviewer and graduate research examiner for Universities in Canada, South Africa and Hong Kong. Active in international sports medicine he is Past-President of the International Federation of Sports Medicine (FIMS).

Dr. Frontera was a member of the Blue Ribbon Panel appointed by the Director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH-USA) to assess the status of rehabilitation research across the USA and of the program committee that organized the NIH conference to discuss the future plan for rehabilitation research. He has been active in 16 NIH grants including 5 as principal investigator.

Dr. Frontera has received several awards including the Association of Academic Physiatrists' Distinguished Academician Award in 2005 and Outstanding Service Award in 2010, the Best Scientific Research Paper (3 times) presented by the American Academy of PM&R, the Harvard Foundation Award for his contributions to the field of PM&R (1998), the Sydney Licht Lecture Award of the International Society of PM&R (2011), and the Excellence in Rehabilitation of Aging Persons Award of the Gerontological Society of America (2015). He was the first recipient of Kessler's Foundation's Joel DeLisa, MD Award for Excellence in PM&R (2011). He is an honorary member of the national societies of PM&R in several countries including Chile, Dominican Republic, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Spain, and Portugal.