

Physical Therapist Assistant



Career Description

Physical therapist assistants work under the supervision of a physical therapist. Their duties include assisting the physical therapist by providing selected interventions within the plan of care, training patients in exercises and activities of daily living, conducting treatments, using special equipment, administering modalities and other treatment procedures, and reporting to the physical therapist on the patient's responses.



Employment Characteristics

Physical therapist assistants work in:

- Hospitals
- Private physical therapy offices
- Community health centers
- Corporate or industrial health centers
- Sports facilities
- Research institutions
- Rehabilitation centers
- Nursing homes
- Home health agencies
- Schools
- Pediatric centers
- Colleges and universities



Salary

Data from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics for 2007 shows that wages at the 10th percentile were \$27,800, the 50th percentile (median) at \$44,130, and the 90th percentile at \$61,340 (www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes312021.htm). For more information, refer to www.ama-assn.org/go/hpsalary.



Educational Programs

Length. These associate's degree programs—usually offered in a community or junior college—are 2 years long.

Prerequisites. Successful completion of high school courses in social sciences, biology, mathematics, physics, English, and chemistry is encouraged but not required.

Curriculum. The curriculum includes 1 year of general education and 1 year of technical courses and clinical experience.



Inquiries

Careers, Education, and Certification

American Physical Therapy Association
1111 North Fairfax Street
Alexandria, VA 22314-1488
703 684-2782 or 800 999-2782
703 684-7343 Fax
www.apta.org

Program Accreditation

Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education
Mary Jane Harris, MS PT, Director of Accreditation
1111 North Fairfax Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
703 684-2782
www.apta.org/capte