

GRADUATE PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

Upon completion of the Physical Therapist Assistant curriculum, the graduate will:

1. Demonstrate a general core of academic general education knowledge that includes written communication and biological, physical, behavioral, and social sciences.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of sciences and scientific reasoning in topics basic to physical therapy including the cardiovascular, endocrine and metabolic, gastrointestinal, genital and reproductive, hematologic, hepatic and biliary, immune, integumentary, lymphatic, musculoskeletal, nervous, respiratory, and renal and urologic systems; and the medical and surgical conditions across the lifespan commonly seen by physical therapist assistants.
3. Provide physical therapy care that adheres to practice standards of ethics, values, and responsibilities which includes the following:
 - a. Adherence to legal practice standards, including all federal, state, and institutional regulations related to patient/client care and fiscal management
 - b. Reporting to appropriate authorities suspected cases of abuse of vulnerable populations
 - c. Reporting to appropriate authorities suspected cases of fraud and abuse related to the utilization of and payment for physical therapy and other health care services
 - d. Performing duties in a manner consistent with the Guide for Conduct of the Physical Therapist Assistant (APTA) and the Standards of Ethical Conduct (APTA) to meet the expectations of patients, members of the physical therapy profession, and other providers as necessary
 - e. Performing duties in a manner consistent with the APTA's *Values-Based Behaviors for the Physical Therapist Assistant*.
 - f. Implementing, in response to an ethical situation, a plan of action that demonstrates sound moral reasoning congruent with core professional ethics and values.
 - g. Communicating effectively with all stakeholders, including patients'/clients' differences, values, preference, and expressed needs in all work related activities.

- h. Identifying, respecting, and acting with consideration for patients'/clients' differences, values, preferences, and expressed needs in all work-related activities.
 - i. Applying current knowledge, theory, and clinical judgment while considering the patient/client perspective and the environment, based on the plan of care established by the physical therapist.
 - j. Identifying basic concepts in professional literature including, but not limited to validity, reliability, and the level of statistical significance.
 - k. Identifying and integrating appropriate evidence-based resources to support clinical decision-making for progression of the patient within the plan of care established by the physical therapist.
 - l. Effectively educating others using teaching methods that are commensurate with the needs of the patient, caregiver, or healthcare personnel.
 - m. Participating in professional and community organizations that provide opportunities for volunteerism, advocacy, and leadership.
 - n. Identifying career development and lifelong learning opportunities, including the role of the physical therapist assistant in the clinical education of physical therapist assistant students.
4. Provide Patient/Client Management that includes the following:
- a. Interviewing patients/clients, caregivers, and family to obtain current information related to prior and current levels of function and general health status (e.g. fatigue, fever, malaise, unexplained weight change, etc.)
 - b. Using the International Classification of Functioning, Disability, and Health (ICF) to describe a patient's/client's impairments, activity, and participation limitations.
5. Carry out the plan of care established by the physical therapist, including:
- a. Communicating an understanding of the plan of care developed by the physical therapist to achieve short and long term goals and intended outcomes.
 - b. Reviewing health records (e.g. lab values, diagnostic tests, specialty reports, narrative, consults, and physical therapy documentation) prior to carrying out the PT plan of care.

- c. Monitoring and adjusting interventions in the plan of care in response to patient/client status and clinical indications.
 - d. Reporting any changes in patient/client status or progress to the supervising physical therapist.
 - e. Determining when an intervention should not be performed due to clinical indications or when the direction to perform the interventions is beyond that which is appropriate for the physical therapist assistant.
 - f. Contributing to the discontinuation of episode of care planning and follow-up processes as directed by the supervising physical therapist.
6. Demonstrate competence in implementing selected components of physical therapy interventions in the plan of care established by the physical therapist including:
- a. Airway clearance techniques: such as breathing exercises, coughing techniques, an secretion mobilization
 - b. Application of Devices and Equipment: such as assistive/adaptive devices and prosthetic and orthotic devices
 - c. Biophysical agents: such as biofeedback, electrotherapeutic agents compression therapies, cryotherapy, hydrotherapy, superficial and deep thermal agents, traction, and light therapies.
 - d. Functional Training in Self-Care and in Domestic, Education, Work, Community, Social, and Civic Life.
 - e. Manual Therapy Techniques: including passive range of motion and therapeutic massage.
 - f. Motor function Training: such as balance and gait training
 - g. Patient/Client Education
 - h. Therapeutic Exercise
 - i. Wound Management: such as isolation techniques, sterile technique, application and removal of dressing or agents, and identification of precautions for dressing removal.

7. Demonstrate competence in performing components of data collection skills essential for carrying out the plan of care by administering the appropriate tests and measures (before, during, and after interventions) for the following areas:
 - a. Aerobic Capacity and Endurance: including measurement of standard vital signs, recognizing a monitoring responses to positional changes and activities (e.g. orthostatic hypotension, response to exercise)
 - b. Anthropometric characteristics: Including measuring height, weight, length, and girth.
 - c. Mental Functions: detecting changes in the patient's state of arousal, mentation and cognition
 - d. Assistive Technology: identify the individual's and caregiver's ability to care for the device; recognize changes in skin condition and safety factors while using devices and equipment
 - e. Gait, Locomotion, and Balance: Determine the safety, status, and progression of patients while engaged in gait locomotion, balance, wheelchair management and mobility.
 - f. Integumentary Integrity: Detect absent or altered sensation; normal and abnormal integumentary changes; activities, positioning, and postures that aggravate or relieve pain or altered sensations or that can produce associated skin trauma; and recognize viable versus nonviable tissue.
 - g. Joint Integrity and Mobility: Detect normal and abnormal joint movement
 - h. Muscle Performance: Measure muscle strength by manual muscle testing; observe the presence or absence of muscle mass; recognize normal and abnormal muscle length, and changes in muscle tone.
 - i. Neuromotor Development: Detect gross motor milestones, fine motor milestones, and righting and equilibrium reactions
 - j. Pain: Administer standardized questionnaires, graphs, behavioral scales, or visual analog scales for pain; recognize activities, positioning, and postures that aggravate or relieve pain or altered sensations.
 - k. Posture: determine normal and abnormal alignment of trunk and extremities at rest and during activities.
 - l. Range of Motion: measure functional range of motion and measure range of motion using an appropriate measurement device.

- m. Self-care and Civic, Community, Domestic, Education, Social and Work Life: Inspect the physical environment and measure physical spaces; recognize safety and barriers in the home, community and work environments; recognize level of functional status; administer standardized questionnaires to patients and others.
 - n. Ventilation, Respiration, and Circulation: detect signs and symptoms of respiratory distress, and activities that aggravate or relieve edema, pain, dyspnea, or other symptoms; describe thoracoabdominal movements and breathing patterns with activity, and cough and sputum characteristics.
8. Complete accurate documentation that follow s guidelines and specific documentation formats required by state practice acts, the practice setting, and other regulatory agencies.
9. Respond effectively to patient/client and environmental emergencies that commonly occur in the clinical setting.
10. Participate in Health Care Environment by:
- a. Contributing to efforts to increase patient and healthcare provider safety
 - b. Participating in the provision of patient-centered interprofessional collaborative care.
 - c. Participating in performance improvement activities (quality assurance).
11. Participate in Practice Management by:
- a. Describing aspects of organizational planning an operation of the physical therapy service.
 - b. Describing accurate and timely information for billing and payment purposes.