

"baby boom" generation ages, more patients will require therapy for arthritis, stroke, heart disease, and other conditions common to older people. The growing elderly population is particularly vulnerable to chronic and debilitating conditions that will require the services of physical therapy personnel. There are also a growing number of employers that are utilizing the physical therapy community to evaluate worksites, develop exercise programs, and teach safe work habits in an effort to reduce injuries. The nation's increasing participation in sports and fitness activities is yet another reason why more physical therapy personnel will be needed in the years to come.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

American Physical Therapy Association
1111 North Fairfax Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
Phone: (800) 999-2782
Web: www.ncpt.org

Mississippi Physical Therapy Association
921 Congress Street
Jackson, MS 39202
Phone: (601) 354-3629

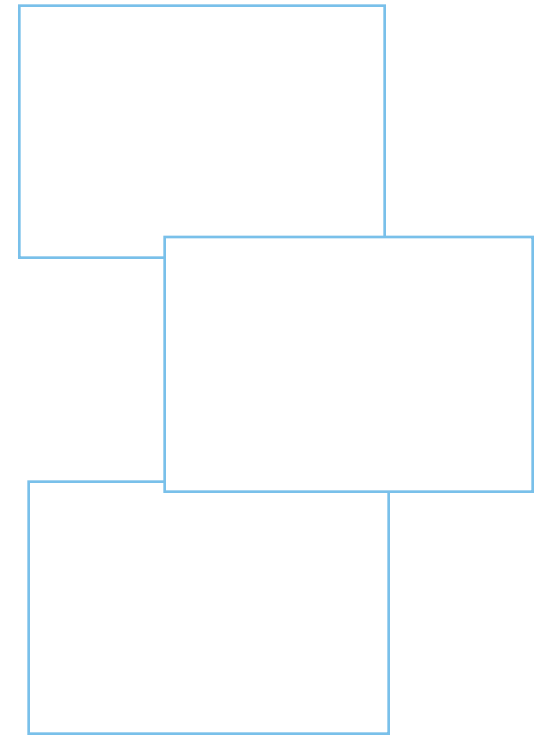


MHA HEALTH CAREERS CENTER

6425 LAKEOVER ROAD (39213)
P.O. Box 16444
JACKSON, MS 39236-6444
PHONE (601) 982-3251
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*Promoting Health
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A division of Mississippi Hospital Association

POSITION RESPONSIBILITIES

Physical therapy assistants are skilled personnel who help administer tests and treatment programs under the supervision of a physical therapist. Some of their duties include training patients in exercise and activities of daily living, using special equipment, and evaluating the patient's progress. They also perform treatment procedures in accordance with the planned programs, assist the physical therapist in carrying out more complex procedures, and observe and report patient behavior to their supervisor. Physical therapist assistants also help patients perform stretching and strengthening exercises in accordance with their specified therapy program. An individual interested in becoming a physical therapy assistant must have a willingness to work with ill and disabled people on a regular basis. They must also be physically and mentally fit in order to fulfill the demands of the profession. This profession requires good communication skills, creativity, physical dexterity and coordination, organization, and self-motivation.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

Physical therapy assistants are utilized in a variety of work environments. Some of these include hospitals, private physical therapy offices, nursing homes, sports facilities, rehabilitation centers, research institutions, pediatric centers, home health agencies, and colleges and universities.

HIGH SCHOOL PREPARATION

Students interested in a career as a physical therapy assistant should take courses in algebra, biology, chemistry, geometry, computer skills, medical assisting, sociology, English, trigonometry, humanities, health occupations/medical professions education, and physical education.

COLLEGE REQUIREMENTS

A physical therapy assistant must obtain an Associate's Degree from an institution approved by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE). Graduates are then eligible to take the national/state physical therapist assistant licensure exam (PTA). This exam must be passed in order to practice in the State of Mississippi.

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Hinds Community College
Nursing / Allied Health Center
1750 Chadwick Drive
Jackson, MS 39204
Phone: (601) 372-6507
Web: www.hinds.cc.ms.us

Itawamba Community College
602 W Hill Street
Fulton, MS 38843
Phone: (601) 862-3101
Web: www.icc.cc.ms.us

Pearl River Community College
101 Hwy 11 North Box 5120
Poplarville, MS 39470
Phone: (601) 795-6801
Web: www.prcc.cc.ms.us

Meridian Community College
Drawer #358
Meridian, MS 39307
Phone: (601) 484-8673
Web: www.mcc.cc.ms.us

SALARY RANGE

Average Annual Salary--\$26,700
Salary Range--\$25,000-\$30,000

CAREER OUTLOOK

As new technologies save more and more lives, the demand for physical therapy assistants will continue to skyrocket. As the