



Health Careers In Alaska

www.HealthCareersInAlaska.Info

Physical Therapist

Physical therapists (PTs) diagnose and treat people of all ages who have medical problems or other health-related conditions that limit their abilities to move and perform functional activities in their daily lives. PTs examine each individual and develop a plan using treatment techniques to promote the ability to move, reduce pain, restore function, and prevent disability. In addition, pts work with individuals to prevent the loss of mobility before it occurs by developing fitness and wellness-oriented programs for healthier and more active lifestyles.

Individual treatment programs can include many forms of exercise (such as strengthening, balance, flexibility, postpar-

tum, sport specific, and even relaxation exercises), as well as include the use of heat, cold, electricity, ultrasound, joint mobilization, and massage. The PT often provides instruction and home programs to patients and their families to continue the recovery process after therapy has ended. The job responsibilities of a pt are often physically demanding and require that most therapists be in good physical condition.

PTs may choose to pursue an area of special interest such as sports medicine, cardio-pulmonary related problems, neurology, and may specialize in providing care to a particular population such as children, adults and the elderly.

Physical Therapist Facts:

Where do physical therapists work in Alaska?

In rural Alaska, PTs generally work in hospitals located in regional centers. They are also employed by school districts to assess and treat children. These services may be provided to small areas by a traveling PT. An increasing number of PTs work in private practice, industry, athletic departments, nursing homes, and homehealth agencies.

Educational Requirements

- Graduation from high school with coursework in English, science, and math.
- Completion of a four year bachelor degree.
- Completion of a post-baccalaureate degree from an accredited education program is required. Some programs offer a master's degree, but a majority of programs now offer the Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) with the master's degree being phased out.
- PT licensure is required by all states. After graduation, candidates must pass a state-administered national exam and be approved by their state's licensing board.

Hourly Wage Range:

\$30.46-\$67.13 (Mean \$44.58)

**based on Alaska DOL*

Years in School:

5-7 years (after high school graduation).

Academic Programs in Alaska

There are no physical therapy programs in Alaska. For a list of accredited physical therapy programs in the United States, visit the American Physical Therapy Association's website: <http://www.apta.org/> (see Education Programs: Student Resources: PT programs). Programs are sorted by state.

State Contact:

Alaska Physical Therapy Association

Phone: (907) 566-3749

Email: admin@akapta.org

Website: <http://www.akapta.org>

National Contacts:

American Physical Therapy Association

Phone: (703) 684-2782

Toll Free: (800) 999-2782

Website: <http://www.apta.org/>

