

JOB OUTLOOK REMAINS EXCELLENT FOR THERAPY POSITIONS

By Daniel Casciato, M.B.A.

Therapy jobs are experiencing some of the best employment conditions in about a decade. Government economists expect job growth for all therapy positions to be much faster than the average for all careers through 2014.

In the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Outlook Handbook, - which provides a summary of information about U.S. positions - it stated that employment of therapy positions is expected to grow much faster than the average for all occupations through 2006. That's great news to anyone in the therapy field.

DOUBLE DIGIT GROWTH FOR PTs

Physical therapists have even greater reason to celebrate. *Money Magazine* recently rated physical therapy positions as 12th among the 50 fastest growing careers. It predicts a 36.74 percent job growth in the next decade.

According to a series of surveys recently conducted and released by the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA), "physical therapists are experiencing virtually no unemployment and are reporting overall increased salaries."

APTA's Physical Therapist Employment Survey was designed to assess trends in employment patterns, and the most recent version shows the lowest unemployment rate since data were first collected in October 1998.

SENIORS BOOSTS JOB GROWTH

The Bureau of Labor Statistics also stated in their annual outlook handbook that demand for therapists and aides will continue to rise with growth in the number of individuals with disabilities or limited function. The rapidly growing senior population is particularly vulnerable to chronic

and debilitating conditions that require therapeutic services.

Also, the baby-boom generation is entering the prime age for heart attacks and strokes, increasing the demand for cardiac and physical rehabilitation. Older patients often need more assistance in their treatment, making the roles of assistants and aides vital.

OTHER REASONS FOR GROWTH

More young people will need physical therapy as technological advances save the lives of a larger proportion of newborns with severe birth defects. Future medical developments will also permit a higher percentage of trauma victims to survive, creating additional demand for rehabilitative care

Growth may also result from advances in medical technology which permits treatment of more disabling conditions.

"... Demand for physical therapists and aides will continue to rise ..."

Widespread interest in health promotion should also increase demand for therapy services. A growing number of employers are using physical therapists to evaluate worksites, develop exercise programs, and teach safe work habits to employees in the hope of reducing injuries.

For more information on therapy position earnings and job outlook, please visit the following page on the Bureau of Labor Statistics Web site: <http://stats.bls.gov/oco/home.htm>

Daniel Casciato has been a freelance writer for ten years and has written over 500 articles in that span. He currently writes for various national publications.

THERAPY SALARIES

From *Money Magazine*

Physical therapists: Average pay: \$54,883

- 75% in this career make more than: \$50,803
- 50% in this career make more than: \$54,681
- 25% in this career make more than: \$58,772

Physical therapist assistants: Average pay: \$42,086

- 75% in this career make more than: \$32,561
- 50% in this career make more than: \$39,784
- 25% in this career make more than: \$45,678

Occupational therapist assistants: Average pay: \$42,639

- 75% in this career make more than: \$33,042
- 50% in this career make more than: \$40,086
- 25% in this career make more than: \$45,997

SALARY WEB SITES FOR JOB SEEKERS

For national salaries, visit <http://stats.bls.gov/oes/2003/may/oes291123.htm>

For salaries by state, visit <http://stats.bls.gov/oes/2003/may/oessrcst.htm>

For salaries by region, visit <http://stats.bls.gov/oes/2003/may/oessrcma.htm>

If there are Web sites you want to recommend to other job seekers, please send us an email at info@jobsintherapy.com.

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