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Physical Therapist Assistant

Is this the career for you?

Thank You

- Thank you for your interest in the Southeast Community College Physical Therapist Assistant Program. In order to be considered for admission, students must complete this **Professional Awareness Activities** by March 15th of the admission cycle.
  - The Professional Awareness Activity includes viewing this presentation and **completing the survey** thoroughly and with thoughtfulness (see the link at the end of the presentation) **AND**
  - Completion of minimum of 20 hours of observation in a physical therapy practice setting. Applicants are to utilize the **Job Observation Form** (see the Program Webpage under "Get Started") and email it to healthsciences@southeast.edu .

Thank You

- In addition to this activity, students must complete an **Online Application** for the Physical Therapist Assistant program. This link can be found on the PTA program webpage (under *Get Started-What's Required*) and at the end of this presentation.
- Finally, students must complete a Health Statement and CPR Certification—**American Heart Association BLS Certification** email both to: healthsciences@southeast.edu or deliver/mail to SCC Health Sciences, Room 230, Lincoln Campus: 8800 O Street, Lincoln, NE 68520.

Is physical therapist assistant the career for you?

- Please navigate the following presentation to learn about physical therapy and physical therapist assistants
- At the end of the presentation you will be directed to click on a link to a survey in order to answer a few questions. ***This must be complete in order to provide documentation of completing the Professional Awareness Activity*** for possible admission into the Physical Therapist Assistant Program

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Is physical therapist assistant the career for you?

- At the end of the presentation prospective students will be able to answer the following questions about Physical Therapist Assistant (PTAs):
  - What do PTAs do?
  - Where can PTAs work?
  - What tools to PTAs use?
  - What skills should PTAs possess?
  - Are you a good candidate for the PTA program?
  - What is the job outlook for PTAs?

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What is a Physical Therapist Assistant?

- The Physical Therapist Assistant is a technically educated health care provider who assists the Physical Therapist in the provision of physical therapy. The PTA is a graduate of a physical therapist assistant associate degree program accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE).
- Physical therapist assistants assist the PT in treatment of individuals of all ages from newborns to people at the end of life. Many patients have injuries, disabilities, or other health conditions that need treatment

What do Physical Therapist Assistants do?

- Physical Therapist Assistants:
  - Provide treatment
    - Therapeutic exercise for strength, flexibility, and balance
    - Functional training perhaps after a stroke, spinal cord injury, or traumatic brain injury
    - Gait training
    - Electrotherapeutic modalities
    - Mechanical modalities
    - Transfer training
    - Wound dressing
    - Airway clearance techniques
    - Manual therapy including soft tissue mobilization or massage

- Please click here to watch a short video or click the link below

Where do physical therapist assistants work?

- According the American Physical Therapy Association, approximately 72% of PTAs work in hospitals or privately owned clinics.
- PTAs work in settings such as:
  - Rehabilitation facilities
  - Outpatient clinics
  - Acute care hospitals
  - Skilled nursing facilities
  - Long term care facilities
  - School systems
  - Home Health

Where do PTAs work?

Rehabilitation Facilities

- Functional Rehabilitation
  - Strengthening
  - Improving Range of Motion
  - Transfer Training
  - Wheelchair Training
- Gait Training
  - Assistive device training
- Bed Mobility
- Patient Education
- Post-Surgical Rehabilitation
- Wound Monitoring
- Prosthetic training

Outpatient Clinics

- Orthopedic Rehabilitation
- Functional Training
- Activity Modification
- Occupational (Work) Training
- Women's Health
- Manual Therapy
- Modalities
  - Electrotherapeutic Modalities
  - Traction
  - Ultrasound
  - Heat/Cold Modalities
- Taping

Where do PTAs work?

Acute Care Hospitals

- Post surgical rehabilitation
- Traumatic rehabilitation
- Functional Training
- Mobility
  - Bed mobility
  - Transfer training
  - Gait training
    - Assistive device training
- Manage various medical equipment (lines and tubes)

Skilled Nursing Facilities

- Functional training
  - Strengthening
  - Range of Motion
- Mobility
  - Bed mobility
  - Transfer training
    - To chair, to bed, toilet
  - Gait training
    - Assistive device training
- Balance training
- Activities of daily living
- Edema control
- Prosthetic training

Where do PTAs work?

Long Term Care Facilities

- Functional training
  - Strengthening
  - Range of Motion
- Mobility
  - Bed mobility
  - Transfer training
    - To chair, to bed, toilet
  - Gait training
    - Assistive device training
- Balance training
- Activities of daily living
- Edema control

School Systems

- Modifying the environment to maximize participation
  - Adaptive seating
  - Activity modification
- Staff and patient education
- Work on motor development and basic functioning skills

Where do PTAs work?

Home Health

- Post surgical rehabilitation
- Functional training
  - Activities of daily living
  - Gait training
  - Strengthening
  - Range of motion
  - Transfer training
- Activity modification

Home Health Physical Therapy

Rehab Facility

Acute Care Facility

Outpatient Facility

School Based

Long Term Care

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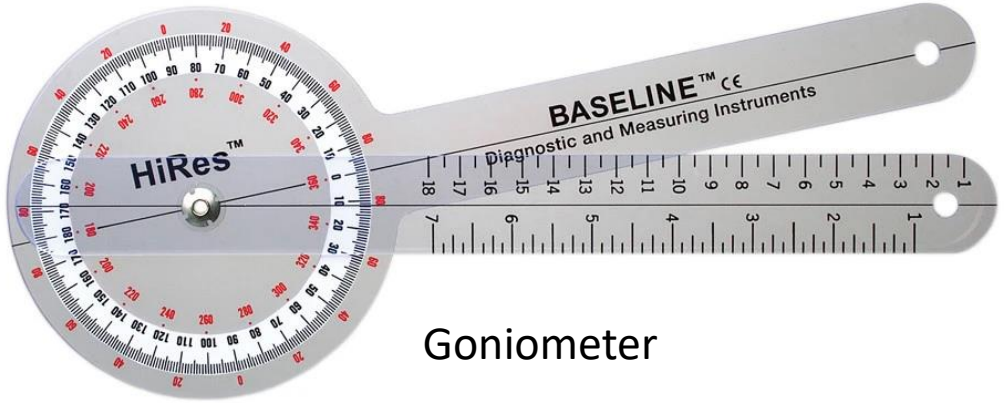
What tools do PTAs use?

- Exercise bands
- Hand weights
- Electrical stimulation
- Thermotherapy
- Cryotherapy
- Goniometer
- Stethoscope
- Pulse oximetry
- Laser or Light therapy
- Ultrasound
- Assistive devices
- Cardio exercise equipment
- Mechanical traction
- Soft tissue mobilization instruments
- Orthotics
- Assistive devices
- Blood pressure cuffs



Goniometer

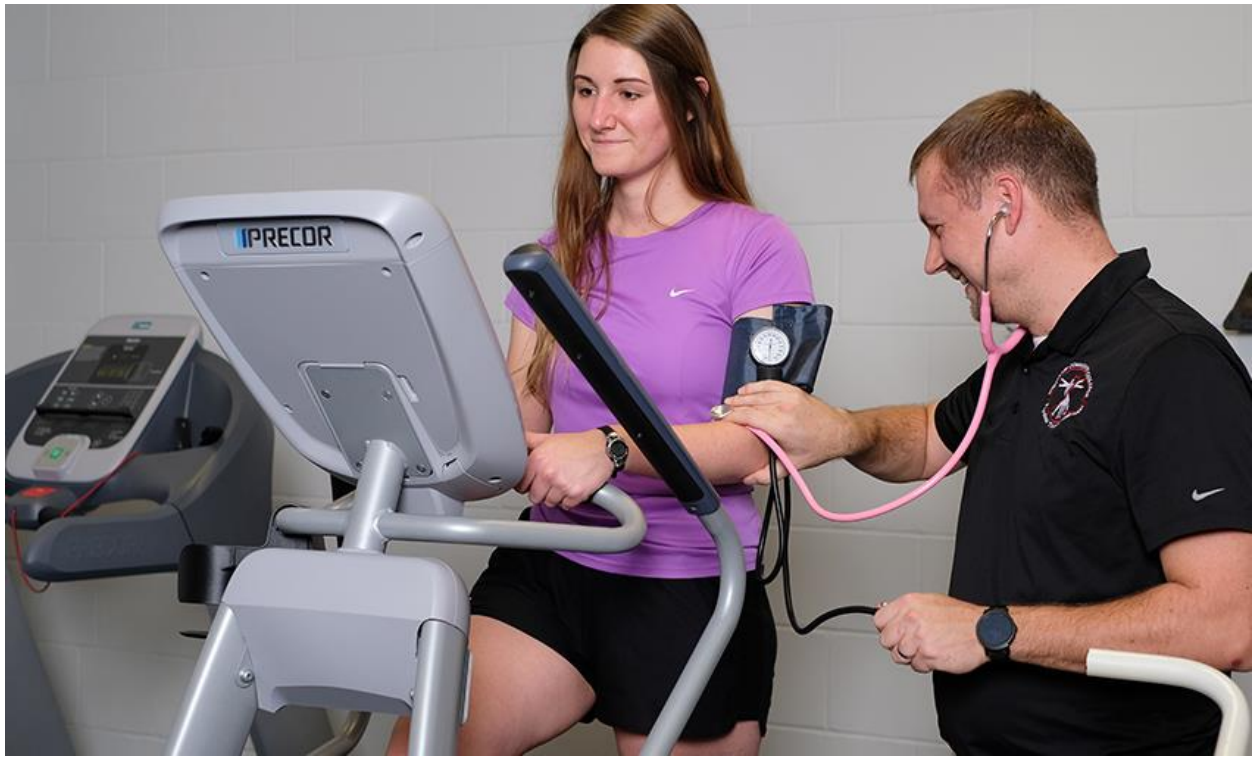
Manual Therapy Tools

Exercise Equipment

Blood Pressure Cuffs

What skills are necessary to be a PTA?

- Communication
- Compassion
- Detail oriented
- Multitasking
- Physical stamina
- Professionalism



PTA Skill: Communication

- Communicating within the healthcare team
  - Supervising Physical Therapist, Occupational Therapy, Speech Therapy, Nursing, Physician
- Communication with Patient, Families, and caregivers
- Utilizing and understanding medical and scientific terminology and information
- Able to produce defensible patient documentation in a medical record

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PTA Skill: Compassion

- Motivating patients
  - Overcoming patients' resistance to therapies
- Empathy
  - Relating to patients in pain, with traumatic experiences or disabilities, and different life experiences
- Emotional intelligence
  - Being able to understand and manage your own and others' emotions
- The ability to calm distressed patients
- Positive outlook

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PTA Skill: Detail Oriented

- Assessing patient progress including progress toward goals, patients pain, and patient reaction to therapy
- The ability to monitor changes in patient vital signs
- The ability to recognize when interventions are outside the scope of practice of a PTA or when consultation with the supervising physical therapist is needed
- Following all infection control policies and procedures

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PTA Skill: Multitasking

- Applying diagnostic muscle, nerve, joint, and functional abilities tests
- Data collection including strength, range of motion, and all data related to functional outcomes
- Maintaining equipment
- Time management skills
- Organization
- Treating or interacting with multiple patients or multiple members of the healthcare team
- Working with minimal supervision
- Be flexible and adaptive to change

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PTA Skill: Physical Stamina

- The ability to perform prolonged manual therapy including passive range of motion, stretching, and manual traction
- Applying manual resistance during therapeutic exercise
- Ability to perform testing for multiple muscle groups
- The ability to perform assisted transfers and bed mobility
- The ability to perform prolonged soft tissue mobilization
- Demonstrating multiple exercises for the patients
- The ability to be on feet for extended periods of time

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PTA Skill: Professionalism

- The ability to perform in a safe and ethical manner
- The ability to perform in a responsible manner
- The ability to interact with other healthcare professionals
- The ability to interact with patients in a respectful manner
- The ability to maintain patient confidentiality

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PTA Job Outlook

- According to the US Bureau of Labor and Statistics
  - Median pay nationaly is $32.73 per hour
  - Expected 25% job growth in the next 10 years which is much faster than average
- Please Watch Video Here
- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

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Skills You will Learn

- In 2008, the American Physical Therapy Association created a document outlining the Minimum Skills of Physical Therapist Assistant Graduates at Entry Level
- Click here to explore the APTA document

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Are you a good candidate to be a PTA?

- Do you like science? PTAs must have a solid understanding of anatomy, physiology, pathophysiology, and kinesiology
- Do you like to interact with people? Clinicians in physical therapy spend a large amount of time interacting with their patients
- Are you empathetic? PTAs must be patient centered and understand the hope, fears, and goals of each individual patient
- Are you disciplined and motivated? PTA schooling is difficult. There is a lot to know when it comes to treating patients in a skillful manner

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What you need to know

- Program Options: Face to Face Only
- Class Times: Routinely Monday-Friday 9am-4pm but class obligations may fall outside of typical class times
- Program Start Term: Fall (August) every year.
- There will be a summer term
- Courses must be taken in order
- Clinical Affiliations: Student will complete 3 clinicals during their time in the program and travel may be required. Clinicals are full time and may include weekends or holidays
- Clinical sites are requiring vaccination against Covid-19. Failure to obtain vaccination will not allow for placement in clinical settings which are required for graduation from the program
- Flu vaccinations will be required prior to placement in Clinical Education 2 & 3

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What is next?

- ❑Complete Placement Testing: Submit test scores showing eligibility to take College Algebra. For details related to placement testing: https://www.southeast.edu/nextgenerationaccuplacer/ . To schedule placement testing refer to: https://www.southeast.edu/testingcenter/
- ❑Complete Program General Education Requirements: Students must receive a grade point average of 2.75 for the sciences (Anatomy and Physiology) and 2.5 general education courses for admission into the program. Submit official transcripts showing college coursework completed at a college/university other than SCC, to SCC Admissions Office 8800 O Street Lincoln, NE 68520.

What is next?

- ❑ Complete Program Professional Awareness Activities
  - ❑ Job Observation Form
  - ❑ Professional Awareness Presentation and Complete Survey
- ❑ Complete Program Application: Online application link will be available during the application period. Fall: February 1 to March 15. Notification of acceptance will be on or after April 15. To apply: https://www.southeast.edu/applynow/
- ❑ ***Please read the application carefully and make sure to apply for the Physical Therapist Assistant Program (Not the AS of Health Sciences Pre-PTA)**

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Professional Awareness Survey

- Thank you for participating in the SCC PTA Professional Awareness Activity.
- In order for your application to be complete and considered for admission to the program, please take your time and complete this questionnaire/survey:
  - ***Professional Awareness Survey***
- Answers will be reviewed by the application team.

- *this survey will not be open until February 1, 2026

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QUESTIONS?

For questions on this document or the admission process, please contact the program at:
sccpta@southeast.edu
or admissions at:
402-437-2600