

Fact Sheet: Minnesota's Physical Therapist Workforce - 2009



The Office of Rural Health and Primary Care (ORHPC), in cooperation with the Minnesota Board of Physical Therapy, collects information about the demographics, employment and career plans of physical therapists (PTs). Minnesota physical therapists voluntarily complete workforce surveys during the annual licensing renewal process. Unless noted, all data presented are based on information collected from physical therapists renewing licenses by January 1, 2009. **Contact ORHPC with questions or data requests about PTs or other Minnesota health care professionals at (651) 201- 3838, or visit ORHPC at: www.health.state.mn.us/divs/orhpc/workforce**

Overall:

- A total of 3,829 physical therapists (PTs) renewed their Minnesota licenses for 2009. ORHPC received 3,016 survey responses, representing a 79 percent response rate.
- Among survey respondents, 2,341 PTs (approximately 45 per 100,000 population) reported practicing in Minnesota.
- The remaining 675 respondents to the survey were not actively working as a PT or practicing in another state.

Sex, Race and Ethnicity:

- Most PTs (76 percent) were female.
- Almost 96 percent of PTs identified themselves as White.
- Only 4 percent of PTs identified themselves as African American, Native American, Asian, Hispanic or multirace.

Geographic Distribution:

- The majority of PTs worked in metropolitan¹ areas of Minnesota (Graph A). The percentage of PTs in rural², micropolitan³ and metropolitan areas has remained fairly consistent since 2007.

Age Range:

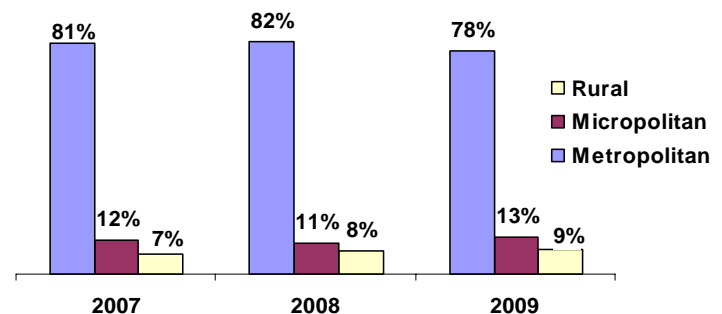
- About 60 percent of PTs were younger than 45. For many other health professions, the majority of licensed professionals were older.

¹ Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA) = 21 counties included in seven metropolitan statistical areas (Minneapolis-St. Paul, St. Cloud, Rochester, Duluth-Superior, Fargo, Grand Forks and La Crosse).

² Rural = 46 counties outside MSAs and Micropolitan areas

³ Micropolitan counties = 20 counties surrounding smaller urban centers of at least 10,000 people.

Graph A
Physical Therapists by Geography 2007-2009

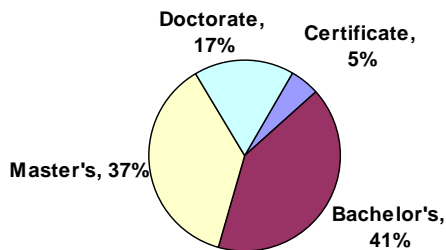


- The median age of PTs was 41 in both metropolitan and micropolitan areas, and 38 in rural areas.

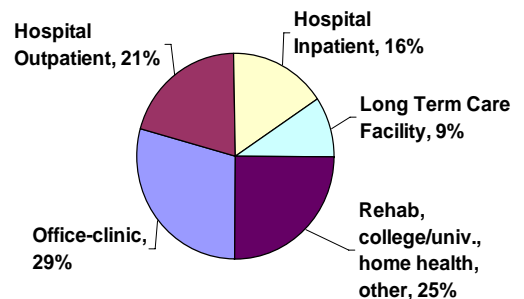
Training:

- Approximately 60 percent of PTs received their training and education from a program in Minnesota.
- More than half (54 percent) had a master's degree or higher in preparation for licensure as a PT (Graph B).
- A small portion (13 percent) of the PT workforce reported receiving specialized training. Of these, 50 percent were trained in orthopedics.
- Thirty percent reported plans to pursue specialized training in the following areas: orthopedics (42 percent), geriatrics (19 percent), sports medicine (16 percent), neurology (11 percent), pediatrics (10 percent), and cardiopulmonary (2 percent).

Graph B
Physical Therapists by Type of Degree - 2009



Graph C
Practice Settings of Physical Therapists - 2009



Practice Longevity Plans:

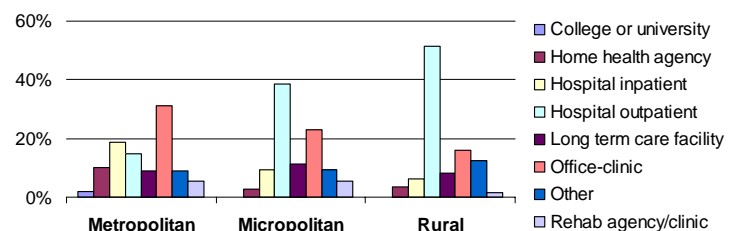
- Most PTs (68 percent) planned to practice another 10 years or more.
- Eighteen percent intended to practice another six to 10 years and 14 percent expected to stop practicing within the next five years.
- Nineteen percent of those expecting to stop practicing in the next five years were younger than 35.

Primary Practice Setting:

- PTs have worked an average of eight years at their current work site or facility.
- Most (55 percent) worked 40 or more hours per week.
- Among PTs who reported working part time (45 percent), most worked 20 to 32 hours per week (Graph C).
- The median wage for a physical therapist rose from \$25.68/hour in 2001 to \$33.12/hour in 2008, a 29 percent increase in real wages.⁴
- The most common practice setting for PTs was a hospital (37 percent), followed by an office/clinical setting (29 percent). Only 9 percent reported working in a long term care facility, while 25 percent of the remaining respondents reported a rehabilitation, home health, university-college or other type of setting (Graph C).

- Fifty two percent of PTs practicing in rural areas reported working in outpatient hospital settings; fewer (39 percent) PTs practicing in micropolitan areas and even fewer (15 percent) practicing in metropolitan areas reported working in outpatient hospital settings (Graph D).
- Provider offices and clinics were more common practice settings for PTs in metropolitan areas (31 percent) than in micropolitan (23 percent) or rural areas (16 percent) (Graph D).

Graph D
Minnesota Physical Therapists by Practice Site & Geography 2009



Primary Activity:

- Nine out of 10 PTs reported direct patient care as their primary activity.
- About 35 percent of PTs reported spending a portion of their time in administration, while 18 percent reported spending some time teaching.

⁴ Department of Employment and Economic Security. 2001 and 2008 Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) Wage Data. <http://www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/tools/oes/default.aspx> Accessed May 20, 2009.