

Fact Sheet: Minnesota's Physical Therapist Assistants 2010



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 therapist assistants (PTAs). Minnesota PTAs voluntarily complete workforce surveys during the annual licensing renewal process. Unless noted, all data presented are based on information collected from licenses renewed by January 1, 2010. **Contact ORHPC with questions or data requests about PTAs or other Minnesota health care professionals at (651) 201- 3838, or visit ORHPC at: www.health.state.mn.us/divs/orhpc/workforce.**

Overall:

- According to the Board of Physical Therapy, 1,097 physical therapist assistants (PTAs) renewed their Minnesota licenses for 2010. ORHPC received 986 survey responses, representing a 90 percent response rate.
- Among survey respondents, 819 PTAs reported actively working in Minnesota. The remaining 167 respondents were not actively working as PTAs or they were practicing in another state.
- Based on the number of respondents and PTA license renewals, an estimated 1,086 PTAs were practicing in Minnesota or approximately 21 per 100,000 population. The American Physical Therapy Association reported 21.3 PTAs per 100,000 population nationally in 2008.

Sex, Race and Ethnicity:

- Only 13 percent of PTAs were male, while 87 percent were female.
- Ninety-eight percent of PTAs identified themselves as White.
- Only 2 percent of PTAs identified themselves as African American, Native American, Asian, Hispanic or multirace.

Geographic Distribution:

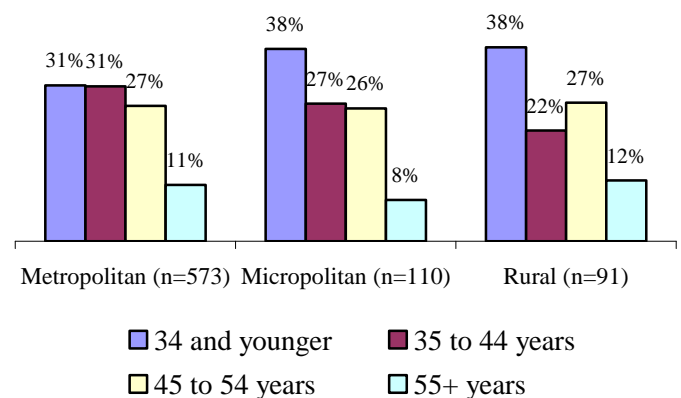
- Metropolitan¹ areas of Minnesota had the highest concentration of PTAs with 74 percent, followed by micropolitan² areas

with 14 percent, and rural areas³ with 12 percent.

Age Range:

- Overall, 62 percent of PTAs were younger than 45, unlike many other health professions, in which the majority of licensed professionals were older.
- A larger proportion of the PTA workforce is younger in micropolitan and rural areas of Minnesota (Graph A).
- The median age of PTAs was 40 in metropolitan, 38 in micropolitan areas, and 39 in rural areas.

Graph A
Physical Therapist Assistants by Age Group and Region, 2010



¹ Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA) = 23 counties included in eight metropolitan statistical areas (Minneapolis-St. Paul, St. Cloud, Rochester, Duluth-Superior, Fargo, Grand Forks, La Crosse and Mankato-North Mankato).

² Micropolitan counties = 20 counties surrounding smaller urban centers of at least 10,000 people.

Training:

- Approximately 82 percent of PTAs received their training and education from a program in Minnesota.

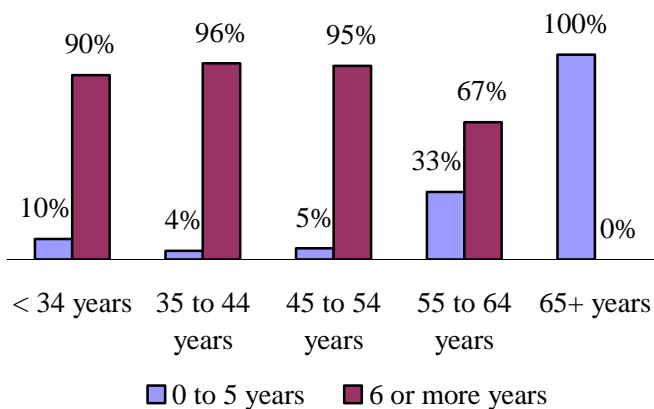
³ Rural = 46 counties outside MSAs and Micropolitan areas

- Almost all PTAs reported having an associate’s degree in preparation for licensure (98 percent).

Practice Longevity Plans:

- Most PTAs (72 percent) planned to practice up to 10 years or more.
- Eighteen percent of PTAs intended to practice another six to 10 years and 10 percent expected to stop practicing within the next five years.
- Ten percent of those expecting to stop practicing in the next five years were younger than 35 (Graph B).

Graph B
Practice Plans of Physical Therapist Assistants, 2010

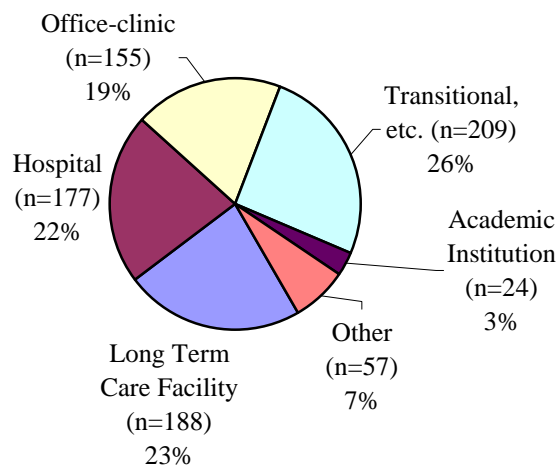


Primary Practice Setting:

- PTAs have worked an average of seven years at their current work site or facility.
- Forty-seven percent worked 40 or more hours per week.
- Among PTAs who reported working part time (less than 40 hours per week), most (56 percent) worked 20 to 32 hours per week.
- Median wage for a physical therapy assistant in 2008 in Minnesota was \$21/hour, slightly lower than the national hourly wage of \$22.89 percent.⁴

- The most common practice settings for PTAs were facilities providing transitional care, home health or rehabilitation (26 percent), followed by long term care (23 percent) and hospital facilities (22 percent) (Graph C).

Graph C
Practice Settings of Physical Therapist Assistants, 2010



- PTAs in rural areas were most often practicing in long term care settings (36 percent). Conversely, PTAs working in micropolitan areas were most often practicing in hospital settings (36 percent), while transitional care, home health and rehabilitation agencies were the most common practice settings for PTAs in metropolitan areas (33 percent).

Primary Activity:

- PTAs reported spending most of their time providing direct patient care (93 percent).
- Some PTAs reported spending time in administration (29 percent), and 19 percent reported spending time teaching.

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⁴MN Department of Employment and Economic Development, Detailed Occupation Data <http://www.positivelyminnesota.com/>. Accessed 3/15/2010.