

Minnesota's Physical Therapist Workforce, 2016

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 2016 PHYSICAL THERAPIST SURVEY

Table of Contents

Minnesota’s Physical Therapist Workforce, 2016	1
Overall	3
Demographics	3
Education	4
Employment, Hours and Future Plans	5
Physical Therapists at Work	6
Geographic Distribution	10

Minnesota's Physical Therapist Workforce, 2016

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 2016 PHYSICAL THERAPIST SURVEY.ⁱ

Overall

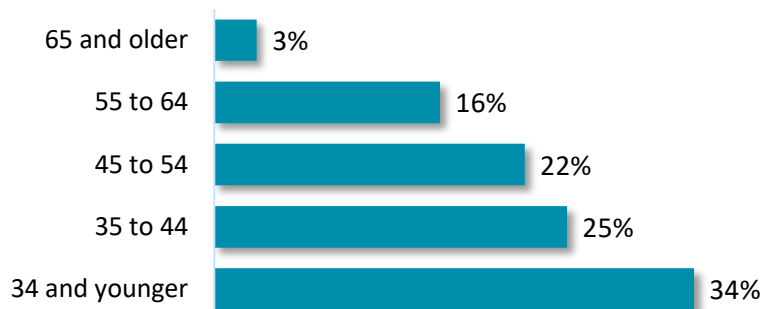
According to the Minnesota Board of Physical Therapy, there were **5,182** physical therapists (PTs) with active licenses in Minnesota as of February 2017.ⁱⁱ

Demographics

Sex. Seventy-four percent of all Minnesota physical therapists are female. With a few exceptions, health care professionals are predominantly female.

Age. Demographically, physical therapists are young, with 59 percent under age 45. The largest share of physical therapists are age 34 and younger (34 percent) and the median age is 40.

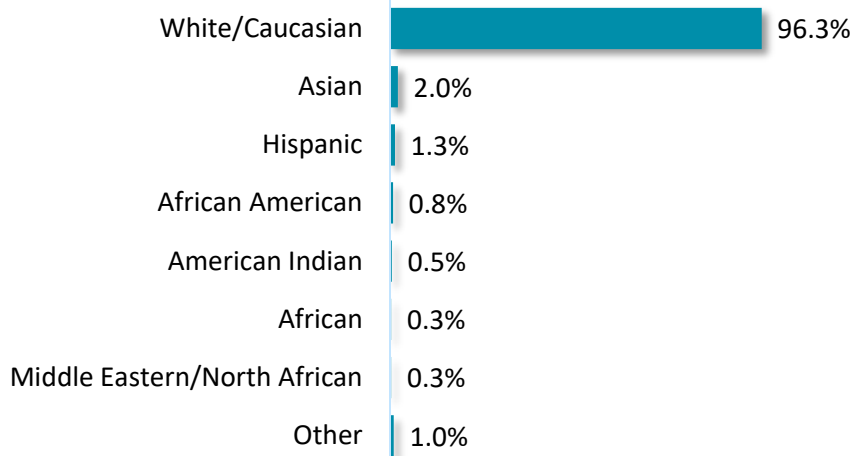
Age of Minnesota Physical Therapists



Source: Minnesota Board of Physical Therapy, March 2017. Analysis done by MDH. Percentages are based on all 5,128 Minnesota licensed physical therapists.

Race and Ethnicity. Typical of racial patterns among health care professionals, the majority (96.7 percent) of physical therapists are white. Additionally, 2 percent are Asian and 1.3 percent are Hispanic.

Race of Minnesota Physical Therapists



Source: MDH Physical Therapist Workforce Survey, 2016. Respondents could select as many races as applicable.

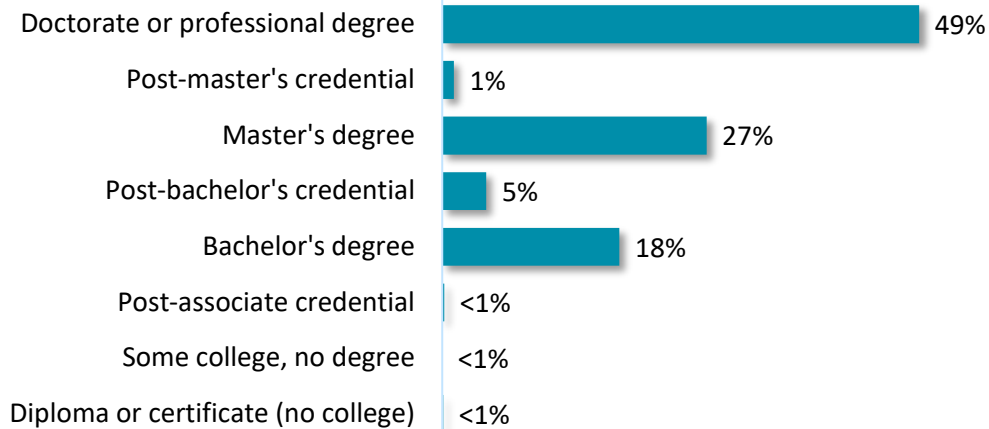
Languages Spoken in Practice. The majority of physical therapists (93%) spoke only English in their practices. The second most commonly spoken language was Spanish (5%). Very small shares of physical therapists spoke other languages with their patients including Sign Language, Russian, French, and Arabic.

Education

Educational Attainment. Just under half of all Minnesota’s physical therapists have a doctoral or professional degree. Starting in 2015, the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education required accredited physical therapy education programs to offer Doctor of Physical Therapy degrees; 98 percent of physical therapists age 34 and younger have a doctoral degree.

When asked how likely they were to pursue additional training or credentials to advance in their field, only about 16 percent of physical therapists said they were “very likely” to enroll in an additional training program. Three percent were “currently enrolled” in a training program (data not shown).

Educational Attainment of Physical Therapists



Source: MDH Physical Therapist Workforce Survey, 2016. Percentages are based on 3,697 valid responses.

Minnesota Physical Therapist Graduates. Just over half of physical therapists obtained their degrees in Minnesota. An additional 27 percent of all physical therapists were educated in one of Minnesota’s four border states—Iowa, North Dakota, South Dakota or Wisconsin. Minnesota physical therapists are trained in a total of 46 states, indicating the importance of drawing PTs from programs across the country.

Physical Therapist School Location

State	Percentage
Minnesota	53%
North Dakota	12%
Wisconsin	9%
Iowa	4%
South Dakota	2%
All other states	20%
International program	1%

Source: MDH Physical Therapist Workforce Survey, 2016. Percentages are based on 3,685 valid responses.

Employment, Hours and Future Plans

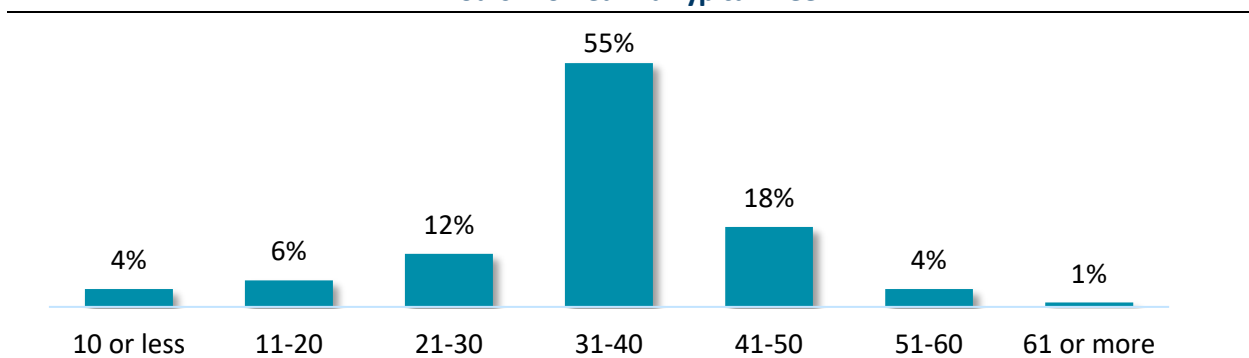
Share of Physical Therapists Employed. Ninety-six percent of Minnesota licensed physical therapists reported on the MDH survey that they were “working in a paid or unpaid position related to [their] license.” This indicates that the majority of the potential workforce is utilized. For the small proportion not working, most were temporarily not working or not seeking employment related to their license.

Hours Worked. The median work week for physical therapists was 40 hours, and just over half worked between 31 and 40 hours per week.

Seventy-six percent reported working a full-time schedule. Ninety-two percent of those 34 and younger reported working full-time. Physical therapists tended to keep working as they age; 45 percent of those age 65 and older reported they work full-time.

Physical therapists spent most of their time caring for patients-- 75 percent reported on the MDH survey that they spent more than three-quarters of their time providing direct patient care.

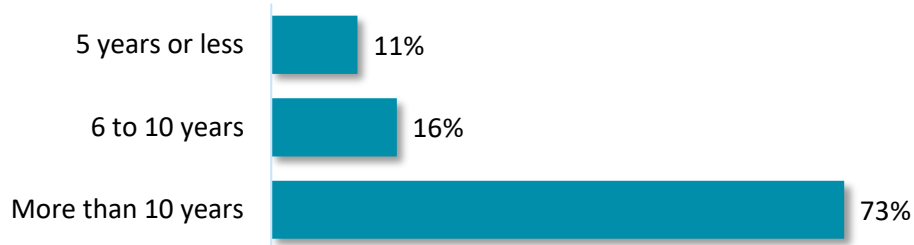
Hours Worked in a Typical Week



Source: MDH Physical Therapist Workforce Survey, 2016. The chart is based on 3,586 valid survey responses.

Future Plans. Physical therapy is a relatively young and stable profession, with 73 percent of physical therapists saying they plan to remain in the field for more than ten years. Just 11 percent indicated they plan to leave the field within five years. The majority of those planning to leave the field (87 percent) indicated they would retire. The less common reasons of note to leave the PT field include burnout, dissatisfaction or to pursue a different career.

“How long do you plan to continue practicing as a physical therapist in Minnesota?”

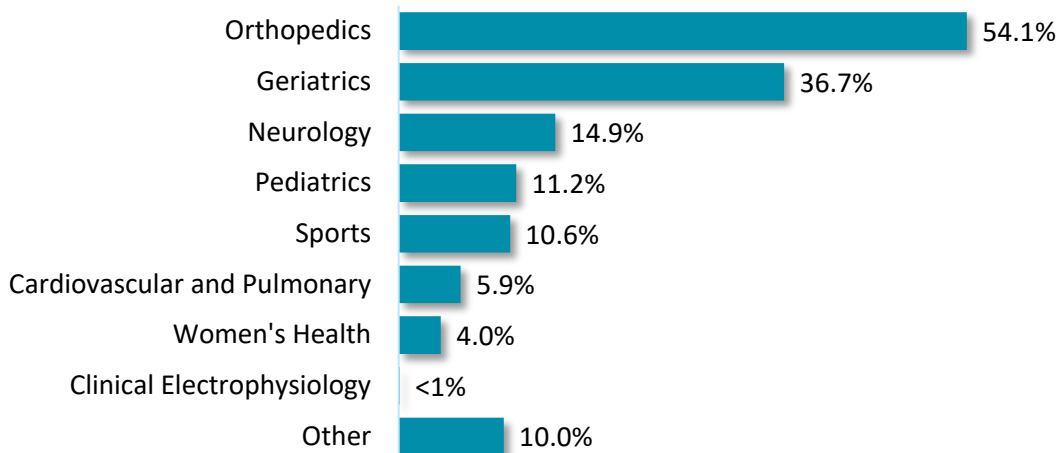


Source: MDH Physical Therapist Workforce Survey, 2016. The chart is based on 3,585 valid survey responses.

Physical Therapists at Work

Specialties. The survey asked physical therapists to identify all the specialties they practiced. As shown below, the single most commonly reported specialty was orthopedics, with more than half reporting this specialty.

Physical Therapists’ Specialties



Source: MDH Physical Therapist Workforce Survey, 2016. The chart is based on 3,715 valid survey responses.

Work Settings. The survey also asked physical therapists to identify their primary work setting. As shown, most physical therapists worked in clinics, followed by hospitals, long-term care and home health care settings.

While two out of three physical therapists reported working at just one location, it is not uncommon for physical therapists to provider services in more than one location-- 19 percent working at two locations and 15 percent working at three or more locations. Number of location breakdowns are similar for those working full-time and part-time.

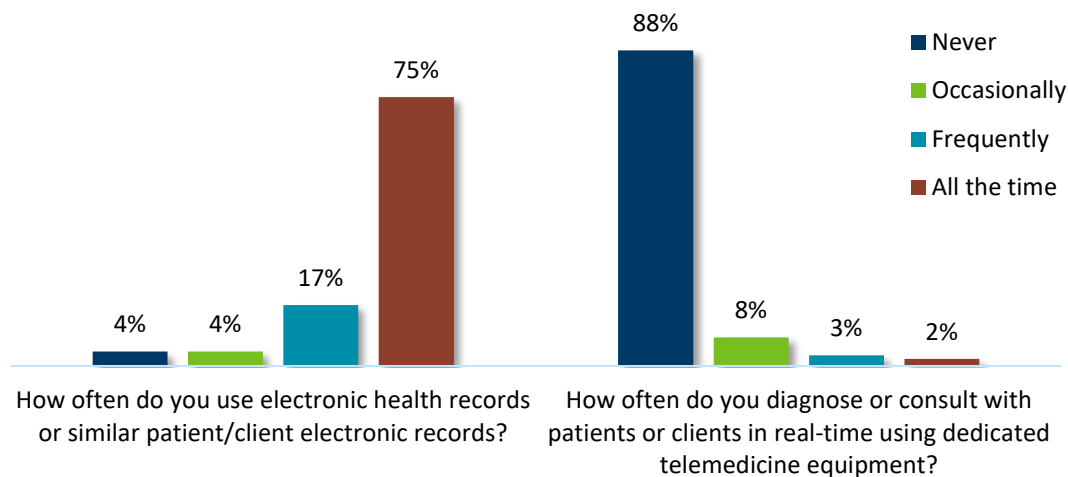
Physical Therapists' Primary Work Settings

Setting	Share of PTs Working in this Setting
Clinic/Professional Office/Health Center/Ambulatory Care	47.8%
Hospital	22.4%
Long-Term Care Facility	11.5%
Home Health Care	8.7%
Academic (Teaching/Research)	2.6%
School (K-12)	2.2%
Community/Faith-Based Organization	0.6%
Insurance/Benefits Management Organization	0.2%
State, County, or City Agency	0.1%
Other	3.8%

Source: MDH Physical Therapist Workforce Survey, 2016. The chart is based on 3,369 valid survey responses.

Technology at Work: The Use of EHRs and Telemedicine Equipment. The survey included items about the use of electronic health records (EHRs) and dedicated telemedicine equipment. The results showed that 92 percent of physical therapists use EHRs “all the time,” or “frequently” and only 13 percent reported using telemedicine equipment.

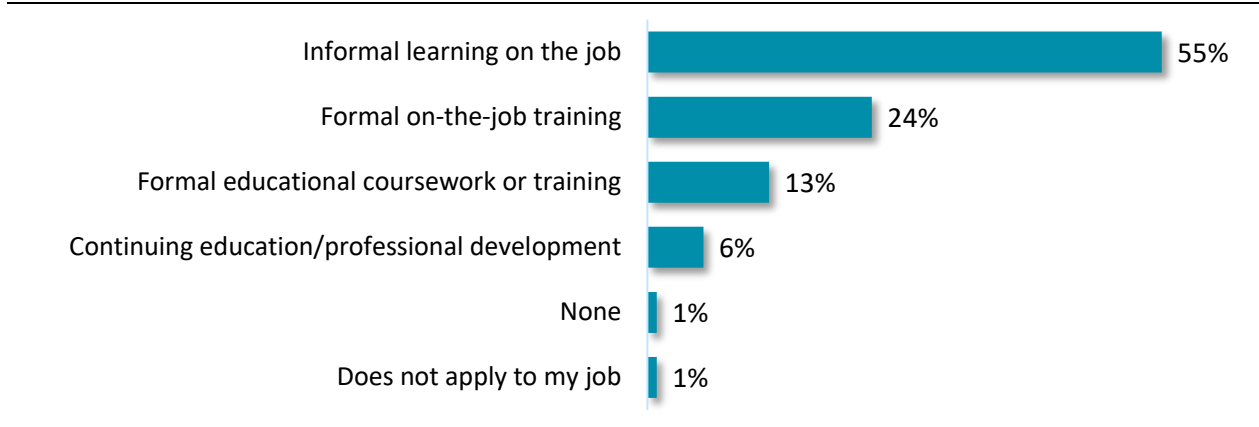
Physical Therapists' Use of Electronic Health Records and Telemedicine Equipment



Source: MDH Physical Therapist Workforce Survey, 2016. The charts are based on 3,461 and 3,460 survey responses.

Teamwork. Health care providers increasingly work in multidisciplinary teams, prompting educators and health policymakers to ask how best to train providers to communicate and coordinate across different professions. MDH included a question on its survey to shed light on these concerns. As shown below, four out of five physical therapists reported that learning on the job (either informal or formal) best prepared them to work in multidisciplinary teams.

“Which of the following work or educational experiences best prepared you to work in a multidisciplinary team when providing care?”

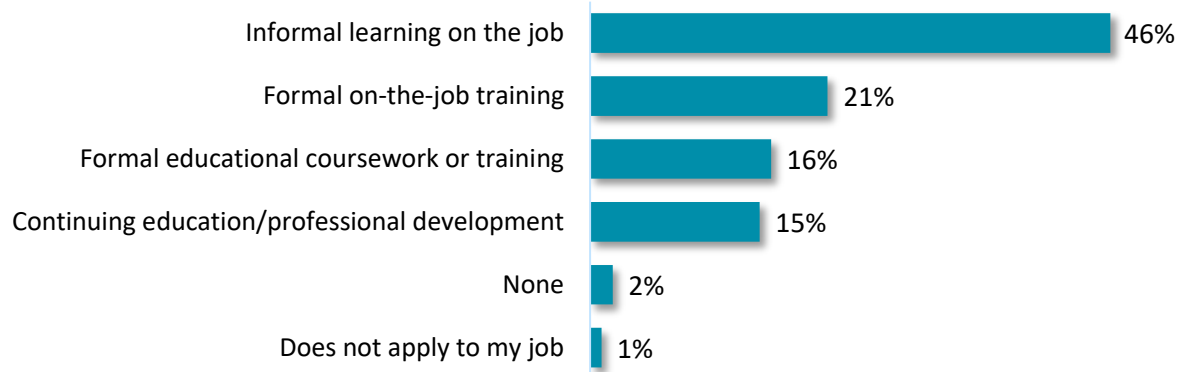


Source: MDH Physical Therapist Workforce Survey, 2016. The chart is based on 3,704 survey responses.

Cultural Competence. Minnesota health care professionals must navigate diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural norms in their work, raising questions about the best way to prepare physical therapists to provide culturally competent care. Similar to working in teams, the highest percent of PTs indicated that formal or informal learning *on the job* provided the best preparation for working with diverse patients.

Only the youngest cohort of physical therapists (34 and younger) found formal educational coursework or training more useful preparation to provide culturally competent care than PTs in other age cohorts. Twenty-six percent in this cohort reported that formal education best prepared them to provide culturally competent care compared to 13 percent of those age 35 to 44 (data not shown). This is likely because school-based cultural competence training has increased in recent years. Those who have been out of school longer benefited more from resources outside their formal education (including continuing education) to prepare them to deliver culturally competent care.

“Which of the following work or educational experiences best prepared you to provide culturally competent care?”

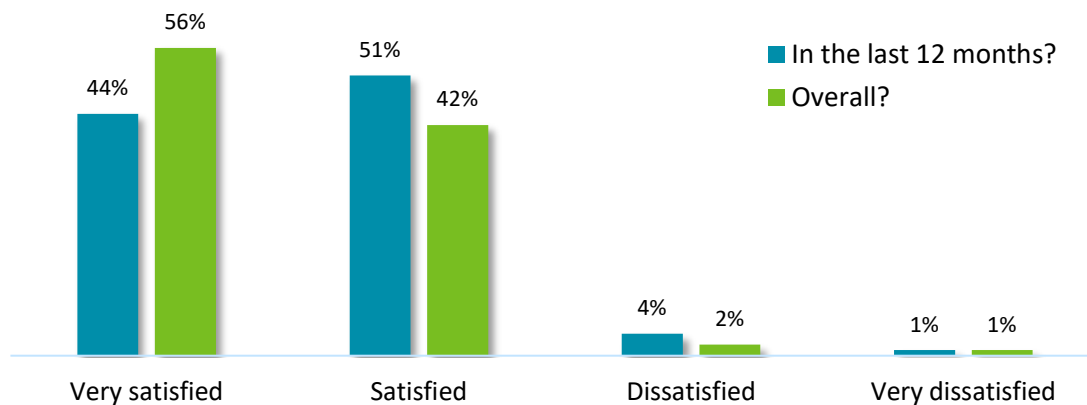


Source: MDH Physical Therapist Workforce Survey, 2016. The chart is based on 3,702 survey responses.

Work and Career Satisfaction. The 2016 survey included questions on career satisfaction in the past 12 months and overall. Career satisfaction in health care is related to higher productivity and care quality along with lower staff turn-over. As shown below, the majority of physical therapists indicated that they were either “satisfied” or “very satisfied,” both in the past 12 months and overall. PTs were slightly more likely to report being very satisfied with their career overall compared to the last 12 months—a trend typical among health care professionals for whom work satisfaction data is available. This is consistent with national findings which suggest that the increase in administrative work—such as dealing with billing, insurance, and electronic medical records—has dampened work satisfaction among health care providers.

Older physical therapists have greater satisfaction with their careers overall than younger physical therapists; 70 percent of those age 55 to 64 say they were very satisfied with their career overall. In comparison, 51 percent of those 34 and younger reported they were very satisfied with their career overall (data not shown). It is unclear if the difference is due to the changes in work demands or if other issues may cause the differences in overall satisfaction levels.

“How satisfied have you been with your career...”



Source: MDH Physical Therapist Workforce Survey, 2016. The chart is based on 3,557 and 3,570 responses.

The survey also asked physical therapists to describe their greatest sources of professional satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Physical therapists report the most career satisfaction from helping patients, especially if they feel they are using their skills and expertise. The relationships they have with patients and co-workers is also important to their satisfaction along with, autonomy, flexibility and opportunities to grow as a professional. A few also mentioned the importance of now having direct access to patients.

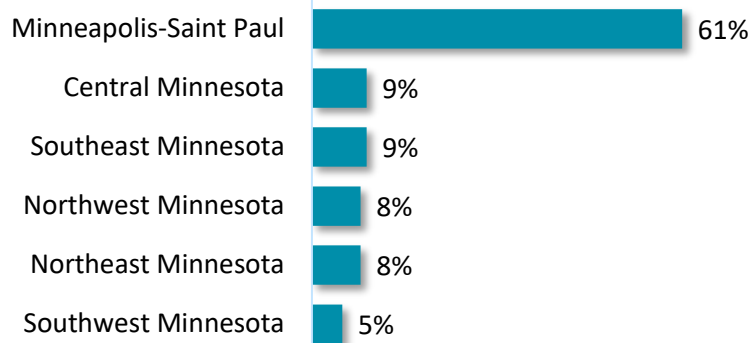
Regarding professional dissatisfaction, the most common responses among physical therapists involved sentiments around the amount of administrative, documentation, and “paperwork” their jobs entailed, especially when it took too much time away from patient care or added to their overall workload. Other common causes of dissatisfaction included an over-focus on productivity, frequent changes in requirements, and challenges related to insurance, Medicare or other payment methods. Additionally, a number of physical therapists commented on challenges with their pay, especially related to student loan amounts.

Geographic Distribution

To understand accessibility of physical therapist services around the state, the next chart provides a view of the geographic distribution of physical therapists.ⁱⁱⁱ These analyses are based on geocoded practice addresses supplied to the Board of Physical Therapy during the license renewal process.^{iv}

Distribution by Region. The chart below shows the distribution of physical therapists across the six planning areas around Minnesota. About two out of three PTs work in the Twin Cities metro area, with small shares of PTs working in other regions of the state. For reference, the Twin Cities metro area is home to approximately 54 percent of Minnesota’s population. This suggests that physical therapists are more concentrated in the Twin Cities area.

Physical Therapist by Minnesota Region



Source: Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) geocoding and analysis of February, 2017 Minnesota Board of Physical Therapy business address data. Percentages above are based on 3,127 valid Minnesota addresses.

MINNESOTA PHYSICAL THERAPIST WORKFORCE, 2016

For more information about survey methods and regional breakouts used in this fact sheet:

<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/orhpc/workforce/method.html>

Visit our website at <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/orhpc/workforce/reports.html> to learn about the Minnesota healthcare workforce. County-level data for this profession is available at

<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/orhpc/workforce/database/> ..

Minnesota Department of Health
Office of Rural Health and Primary Care
85 East 7th Place, Suite 220
Saint Paul, MN 55117
(651) 201-3838
health.orhpc@state.mn.us



ⁱ The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), in cooperation with the Minnesota Board of Physical Therapy, collected information on demographics, education, career and future plans of physical therapists during a workforce survey in 2016. Unless noted, all data are based on information collected from that survey. The response rate for the 2016 PT survey was 72 percent.

ⁱⁱⁱ Of the total licensed professionals with address information, 14% listed an address that was either outside Minnesota or otherwise could not be geocoded, and based on the survey responses we know that 4% of the respondents were not working as a physical therapist. Thus, not all actively licensed PTs are part of the Minnesota workforce.

ⁱⁱⁱ Visit our website at <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/orhpc/workforce/method.html> to learn more about how the two sets of geographic regions in this report are defined.

^{iv} To provide practice address locations, address information was mainly taken from the survey practice address provided. If not in the survey, some practice address information was available from the board. Not all licensed physical therapists had a business address to be geocoded.