PROGRAM-RELATED ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

Physical therapy students must demonstrate, with or without appropriate academic adjustments or reasonable modification to policies and practices, the ability to perform the functions listed below safely, reliably, and efficiently, in compliance with legal and ethical standards during their physical therapy education.

1. **Use appropriate verbal, nonverbal, and written communication with all individuals** when engaged in physical therapy practice, research, and education, including patients, clients, families, caregivers, practitioners, consumers, payers, and policy-makers. This communication includes developing and delivering formal oral presentations in both clinical and classroom settings.

2. **Choose and perform appropriate examination procedures** including, but not limited to, aerobic capacity and endurance; anthropometric characteristics; arousal, attention and cognition; assistive and adaptive devices; community and work integration or reintegration; cranial nerve integrity; environment barriers, ergonomics and body mechanics; gait, locomotion, and balance; integumentary integrity; joint integrity and mobility; motor function; motor performance; neuromotor development and sensory integration; orthotic, protective, and supportive devices; pain; posture; prosthetic requirements; range of motion; reflex integrity; self-care and home management; sensory integrity; ventilation, respiration, and circulation.

3. **Perform a physical therapy evaluation and make appropriate clinical judgments based on examination findings.** Within an evaluation, consideration is given to the level of current impairments; the probability of prolonged impairment, functional limitation, and disability; the living environment; potential discharge destinations; and social supports.

4. **Develop appropriate diagnoses** relevant to physical therapist practice by organizing information obtained from the examination into defined clusters, syndromes, or categories to help determine the most appropriate intervention strategies.

5. **Determine a patient prognosis** by stating the predicted optimal level of improvement in function that might be attained through intervention and the amount of time required to reach that level.

6. **Develop and implement a plan of care** by integrating examination data and incorporating prognostic indicators. Specific treatment interventions include, but are not limited to, therapeutic exercise including aerobic training; functional training in self-care and home management, including activities of daily living (ADL) and instrumental activities of daily living (IADL); functional training in community and work (job/school/play) integration or reintegration, work hardening, and work conditioning; manual therapy techniques, including mobilization and manipulation; wound management; prescription, application, and fabrication (as appropriate) of assistive, adaptive, orthotic, protective, supportive, or prosthetic devices and equipment; airway clearance techniques; and application of thermal, mechanical, and electromagnetic physical agents.

7. **Engage in outcomes data collection and analysis** at each step of patient management as well as with discharge planning.

8. **Demonstrate ability to apply universal precautions and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).**

9. **Interact and practice in collaboration with a variety of professionals,** including, but not limited to, physicians, physician assistants, pharmacists, dentists, nurses, educators, social workers, occupational therapists, speech-language pathologists, athletic trainers, and audiologists.

10. **Participate in student laboratory learning experiences,** role-playing as both physical therapist and patient. Laboratory experiences may include, but are not limited to, palpation, modalities, manual therapy, such as massage, and other hands-on skills, and may involve exercise and other physical activities.
11. **Participate in the process of scientific inquiry** by applying the principles of scientific methods to read and interpret professional literature; participate in, plan, and/or conduct research; evaluate outcomes; and assess new concepts and technologies.

12. Educate by imparting information or skills, and instruct by precept, example, and experience so individuals acquire knowledge, master skills, and develop competence. Students apply teaching/learning theories and methods in health care and community environments using a variety of instructional strategies that are commensurate with the needs and unique characteristics of the learner.

13. **Provide prevention and wellness services**, including screening, health promotion, and education, that are appropriate for physical therapy and promote healthy behaviors in the community.

14. **Participate in administration activities consistent with entry-level physical therapy practice**, including planning, directing, organizing, and managing resources.

15. **Provide consultation** to individuals, businesses, schools, government agencies, or other organizations by rendering professional or expert opinion or advice; applying highly specialized knowledge and skills to identify problems, recommend solutions, or produce a specified outcome or product in a given amount of time on behalf of a patient/client.

16. **Formulate and implement a plan for personal and professional career development** based on self-assessment and feedback from others.

17. **Demonstrate social responsibility** by becoming involved in professional organizations and activities, providing pro bono services, and participating in community and human service organizations.

18. **Incorporate an understanding of the implication of individual and cultural differences when engaged in physical therapy practice, research, and education.**

19. **Assimilate large amounts of didactic materials under time constraints** through a strong commitment to study. Professional programs possess unique demands that may require students to modify their lifestyle accordingly. Time management, prioritization of tasks, as well as the ability to multi-task are all necessary skills to meet these demands.

*The ability to perform the functions listed is measured by:*
- Minimum Performance Standards
- Generic Ability (GA) Assessments
- Clinical Performance Instruments (CPI)
- Licensure Examinations
- Graduate and Employer Surveys
- Clinical Instructor and Graduate Feedback