

HEALTH SERVICES

Speech Pathology, Audiology, Physical & Occupational Therapy

What can I do with this degree?

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

STRATEGIES/INFORMATION

SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY

The assessment and treatment of people with speech, language, voice and fluency disorders.

AUDIOLOGY

Identification, diagnosis, and treatment of people experiencing hearing loss or disorders.

Prevention
Screening
Assessment
Treatment
Follow-up
Administration
Supervision
Teaching
Research

Schools, K-12
Universities and colleges
Hospitals
Physicians' offices
Speech, language and hearing centers
Home healthcare offices
Nursing homes
Residential facilities
Federal agencies including:
 Department of Veterans Affairs
 National Institutes of Health
 Department of Health and Human Services
 Department of Education
 Armed Services
Health Maintenance Organizations
Sole practitioner or group practice
Public Health departments
Rehabilitation centers

Master's degree from an accredited speech-language pathology program required to enter the field.
Master's degree in audiology also required.
Doctoral degree becoming more prevalent.
Over 40 states require licensure or certification of speech pathologists and audiologists to practice. Certificate of Clinical Competence (CCC) by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association is the recognized credential for speech-language pathology and audiology.
Passing score on national examination and a post-graduate supervised clinical experience are required for certification.
Some states may require additional certification to work with special education populations in public schools.
Approximately one half of speech-language pathologists work in schools and another half are employed in healthcare institutions.
Doctorate required for university teaching and research positions.
Speech pathologists and audiologists may work closely with physicians, social workers, and psychologists and other therapists in diagnosis and treatment.

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

STRATEGIES/INFORMATION

Join the National Student Speech-Language-Hearing Association while in school.
Volunteer in a healthcare setting to gain experience working with people in all age groups.
Desire to help and work with people who have disabilities is important. Patience is necessary as rehabilitation may progress slowly.
Develop excellent communication and computer skills.
Learn about communication among various cultures.

PHYSICAL THERAPY

Treatment through physical means for people disabled by illness, accident or congenital handicap. Physical therapy seeks to improve mobility, relieve pain, or minimize permanent physical disabilities.

Clinical Practice
Acute care
Neuro-rehab
Out-patient
Management
Education
Research
Consultation

Hospitals
Clinics
Home healthcare agencies
Nursing homes
Sports medicine facilities
Rehabilitation centers
Schools
Group or private practices
Universities and colleges

Earn bachelor's or master's degree in physical therapy from a program accredited by the American Physical Therapy Association. Programs include supervised clinical experiences.
More programs are moving toward a master's degree and a master's is helpful for promotion to administration or management. Obtain a doctoral degree for teaching and research.
All states require licensure which includes passing an examination.
One third of physical therapists work in hospitals and one quarter are employed in physical therapy offices.
Students interested in physical therapy must attain superior grades in pre-physical therapy course work because competition for admittance to programs is very keen.
Physical therapy requires good knowledge of several basic sciences, including anatomy, physiology, biology, chemistry and physics.

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

STRATEGIES/INFORMATION

Volunteer for a physical therapist in a hospital or clinic to gain experience and improve chances of acceptance into a program. Many programs require volunteer experiences and a good knowledge of the field for admission.

Develop strong interpersonal and communication skills. Must possess patience and a desire to help individuals of all ages with disabilities. A positive attitude is important when working with patients.

Manual dexterity and physical stamina are important in succeeding in physical therapy work.

Some physical therapists specialize in pediatrics, geriatrics, sports, orthopedics, etc. after gaining several years general experience.

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

Treatment through activities with specific goals of people who are unable to function independently due to an injury, illness or disability. Occupational therapy helps enhance the quality of life and increase the independence of individuals who have a mental, emotional or physically disabling condition.

Screening
Evaluation
Treatment
 Physical
 Psychosocial
 Social
 Vocational
Follow-up
Administration
Teaching

Hospitals
Schools
Sole practitioner or group practice
Nursing homes
Community mental health centers
Adult daycare programs
Job training centers
Residential care facilities
Out-patient rehabilitation facilities
Federal and state government
 Armed Forces
 Public Health Service
 Veterans Administration
Universities and colleges

One must earn a bachelor's degree or master's degree in occupational therapy to gain entry in the field. Some programs offer a "certificate" in occupational therapy for students having a degree other than O.T.

Nearly 40 states require licensure. Licensure includes passing a certification exam given by the American Occupational Therapy Certification board and a supervised clinical internship. Those who have passed the exam become Registered Occupational Therapists (OTR).

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

STRATEGIES/INFORMATION

Most occupational therapists work in hospitals, including psychiatric and rehabilitative, followed by school systems as the second largest employer.

Doctoral degree preferred for university teaching positions.

Occupational therapists may choose to specialize in a particular age group or type of disability.

Build a solid foundation in physical, biological and behavioral sciences.

Individuals working in occupational therapy should possess patience and a true interest in helping people with disabilities reach their full potential.

Develop communication skills which are important when interacting with patients and their families.

Volunteer in an occupational therapy or related healthcare setting to experience field first-hand and improve chances of program admittance.

Learn to work within a team as O.T.'s work with many other professionals, including physicians, physical therapists, and social workers in the rehabilitation of patients.