

Observation of Physical Therapy Services

Understanding and appreciating the field of physical therapy as you are preparing to apply to the PTA Program is very important. If you are accepted into the program, it is imperative that you are certain that this is the career path you want to pursue. In addition to applying to the PTA Program, you are required to have a minimum of 20 hours of observational experience in physical therapy. You will need to have at least 10 hours in an in-patient setting and 10 hours in an out-patient setting.

This experience can be through shadowing a PT or PTA (observation) for both in-patient and out-patient settings. Volunteering in a PT setting may also meet the requirements. Documentation will be submitted on observation hours log found on the website or on company letterhead from a facility that has been verified by a PT or PTA at each facility. The documentation (for either criterion) should be submitted with your application to the PTA Program.

In-patient settings may include acute care hospitals, rehabilitation facilities, skilled nursing homes/facilities, “sub-acute care” facilities, or home care agencies.

Out-patient settings may include private practices, out-patient services provided by hospitals or skilled-nursing facilities, PT services in orthopedic surgeon’s offices, school systems, American Heart Association cardiac rehabilitation programs, and aquatic physical therapy services. Experiences in athletic training settings, exercise physiology settings, or chiropractic offices **will not** fulfill this requirement.

The PTA Program is not able to facilitate these experiences for the students and it is the student’s responsibility to complete this pre-admission requirement.

Documentation of the observation experience is due by the application deadline.