

Description of the Sports Physical Therapy Residency Program

Introduction and Purpose

The purpose of a residency in Sports Physical Therapy is to provide the physical therapist with an opportunity to develop advanced competencies in sports physical therapy. This includes development of theoretical rationale, evaluation and treatment skills, and clinical reasoning processes necessary to prevent, treat and rehabilitate injuries in an active population. The sports physical therapy residency will provide the resident with clinical experience under the mentorship of a recognized clinical expert. The residency will also provide the opportunity to interact with other health professionals interested in sports medicine including physicians and athletic trainers. Experiences outside the physical therapy clinic will include providing coverage athletic events and observing physicians during office hours and surgery. The residency will also have a strong research component. The resident will be required to design and complete a research project that is suitable for presentation and/or publication. The residency will include structured learning opportunities such as didactic classwork, lectures, inservices, teaching conferences, journal clubs and/or case presentations. Successful completion of a sports physical therapy residency will assist the individual in preparation for certification as a specialist in sports physical therapy.

Scope of Physical Therapy Residency

The scope of the sports physical therapy residency will be based upon the practice profile for sports physical therapists. The content areas for a sports physical therapy residency will include:

- Rehabilitation and return to activity
- Injury prevention and epidemiology
- Emergency care of athletic injuries
- Diagnosis and evaluation of injuries
- Applied science in human performance
- Medical and surgical conditions
- Research, counseling, and education

Structure of Sports Physical Therapy Residency

The sports physical therapy residency will be structured to provide the resident with a wide range of experiences to develop advanced clinical skills in sports physical therapy. The residents will be expected to work 40-50 hours per week. Experiences will include the following:

Patient Care – The resident will evaluate and treat patients with a variety of musculoskeletal pathologies that are commonly found in the sports physical therapy setting. This will include management of patients with pathology of the knee, shoulder, foot and ankle, and spine. Approximately 40-60% of the resident's time will be spent in providing patient care. Time will be provided for one-to-one clinical instruction between the resident and mentor. During this time, patients will be examined and treated jointly by the resident and mentor. Clinical practice under the supervision of the mentor will allow the resident to develop psychomotor skills and clinical reasoning processes necessary to effectively evaluate and treat individuals with sports related injuries.

On-Field Management of Athletic Injuries – The resident will assist in providing coverage of athletic events under the guidance of a certified sports physical therapist or certified athletic trainer. This will allow the resident to develop skills to prevent, recognize, evaluate, and treat acute sports injuries. Approximately 5-10% of the resident's time will be dedicated to providing coverage at athletic events.

Observation of Physician Office Hours and Surgery – The resident will observe physicians during office hours to gain an appreciation of diagnosis and medical management of common sports related injuries. The resident will also have the opportunity to observe surgery to gain an understanding of current surgical techniques to manage sports related injuries. The resident will spend approximately 5-10% of their time working with and observing physicians.

Research – The resident will be required to design, conduct, and complete a research project related to sports physical therapy. Additionally, the resident will be required to summarize the results in a format suitable for presentation and publication. The resident will spend approximately 10-20% of their time conducting research.

Educational Activities – The resident will participate in numerous educational activities in order to develop theoretical rationale that is required for prevention, evaluation, treatment, and rehabilitation of injuries in an active athletic population. This will include participation in inservices, journal clubs, and conferences. Instructors will also present didactic lectures to provide the residents with knowledge and understanding of the basic sciences that are related to management of athletic injuries and improvement in human performance. The resident may also be provided with the opportunity to enroll in coursework at a college or university related to management of athletic injuries and improvement in human performance. Additionally, the resident may be required to provide inservices for staff members at the host institution. The resident will spend 10-15% of their time in educational activities.

Evaluation of the Resident

To demonstrate their knowledge and skills, residents will be expected to satisfactorily complete written and practical examinations. Written examinations will be used to assess the resident's knowledge of theoretical rationales and decision making processes necessary to practice as a sports physical therapist. Practical examinations will be performed on normal subjects as well as patients to demonstrate competency with psychomotor skills necessary to evaluate and treat an active patient population.

Length of the Residency Program

The residency program will be a minimum of 12 months in length. This will allow adequate time for the resident to develop theoretical rationales as well as psychomotor and clinical reasoning skills necessary to be proficient as a sports physical therapist. Additionally this will allow time for the resident to design and complete a minimum of one research project. The residency year typically runs from August 1 to July 31 of the following year. Beginning the residency in August will allow the resident to begin their experience for on-field management of athletic injuries at the start of the fall sports season. The length of the residency may be extended at some sites to allow the resident to complete requirements for a post-professional degree in physical therapy.

Compensation of Resident

The Sports Physical Therapy Resident will be compensated by the facility at which they complete the residency. Compensation will include salary and benefits to be determined by the individual residency sites. The total compensation package including salary and benefits will be comparable between residencies.

Application Process

Applicants for the Sports Physical Therapy Residency Program should have a minimum of two years clinical experience beyond entry level education for physical therapists. Alternatively, recent graduate of an entry level physical therapy program with more than two years prior experience as an athletic trainer will also be eligible for participation in the residency program. Residency candidates must hold a valid license or be eligible for licensure in the state in which they will complete the residency.

Applicants for the Sports Physical Therapy Residency Program must submit a current copy of their curriculum vitae and a self-evaluation that states their goals and objectives for the residency experience. Three letters of recommendation are required. At least one letter of recommendation must be from a previous employer of the physical therapist. It is recommended that the remaining letters of recommendation include an instructor from physical therapy school and/or a physician that the physical therapist has worked with in the past. **The completed application should be forwarded directly to the residency director at the site(s) that the applicant is interested in. The Sports Physical Therapy residency candidate will be interviewed and selected by individual residency sites.**