

What Can I Do With a Major in...

PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT

Those employed in the field of Physical Therapist Assisting (PTA) support Physical Therapists with rehabilitating patients, including the instruction and supervision of therapeutic exercises and mobility training (including use of crutches, walkers and wheelchairs); use of thermotherapy, electrotherapy, therapeutic massage, traction, hydrotherapy; and patient education. Responsibilities also include recording the patient's responses to treatment and communication with the physical therapist on patient status.

Where can I work?

This profession provides you with a choice of various work environments including government agencies, non-profit organizations, for-profit agencies, and public and private companies.

- Children's Hospitals
- Clinics
- Community Health Centers
- Extended-Care Facilities
- Health Care Facilities
- Hospitals
- In-Home Health Care
- Intensive Care Units
- Nursing Homes
- Physical Therapy Offices
- Rehabilitation Hospitals and Centers
- Sports Medicine Clinics
- Surgical Hospitals
- Trauma Centers

What type of professional organizations and resources are available in this industry?

There are many professional organizations that offer resources, articles, job opportunities, training and conference information. We suggest you visit each organization's website to gather more information and contacts in your field.

- American Academy of Orthopedic Manual Physical Therapists
- American Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine
- American Physical Therapy Association
- Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education
- Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy
- Journal of Orthopedic and Sports Physical Therapy
- Physical Therapy Page at About.com
- World Confederation for Physical Therapy

What type of Physical Therapist Assistant program does San Diego Mesa College offer?

The program at San Diego Mesa College focuses on ethical and legal principles, therapy techniques, human movement and rehabilitation, pathology, and neurology. Knowledge of these techniques and skills will prepare students for a physical therapist assistant position under the supervision of a physical therapist.

- Associate in Science: Physical Therapist Assistant

See college catalog for program descriptions, course titles, and areas of emphasis.

PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT

Associates Degrees/Certificates

Getting Started

Step 1: [Application](#) - Start by completing the online application for admission

Step 2: [Program Specific Application](#) - Complete the program specific Physical Therapist Assistant program application

Step 3: [Orientation](#) - Complete the online New Student Orientation (Flash player required)

Step 4: [Assessment](#) - Visit the Assessment office to learn about English and math testing

Step 5: [Advisement](#) - Complete the online First Semester Planning Workshop

Step 6: [Registration](#) - Register for classes

While You're Taking Classes

Update your resume and craft a cover letter

Attend job fairs

Conduct industry research

Look into volunteer/internship opportunities

Perform job searches

Think about transfer options

See the Transfer or Career Center for assistance

Pathway to becoming a Physical Therapist Assistant

1. Graduate with your associate's degree from an accredited institution.
2. Apply for state licensure through The Department of Consumer Affairs Physical Therapy Board of California.
3. Study for and pass the National Physical Therapy Examination (NPTE).
4. Study for and pass the Jurisprudence Exam for licensure.
5. Continue your education to stay in compliance with state requirements.

Information above adapted from <http://california-vocational-schools.com/articles/how-to-become-a-physical-therapist-assistant-in-california>