

## **ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS FOR NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY PHYSICAL THERAPY STUDENTS**

Physical therapy students must be able to perform, with or without reasonable accommodations, each of these essential functions in order to fully participate in our program and successfully complete the requirements for the DPT.

### **Cognitive Functions**

1. Comprehend, integrate and analyze complex information from the liberal arts, basic sciences, mathematics, psychological and clinical sciences and apply this information to professional course work.
2. Comprehend, integrate, analyze and apply information from written materials, demonstrations, lectures, class discussions, laboratory practice sessions, and real and simulated patients.
3. Effectively utilize information obtained from classroom, laboratory and experiential learning, and written materials to create interventions for real and simulated patients.
4. Access, critique and analyze information from the professional literature, clinical experience and patient preferences to provide evidence-based interventions.
5. Educate others including but not limited to: patients, students, colleagues, peers, the general public/community groups and other health professionals in a variety of venues using appropriate teaching and learning methods.
6. Determine the physical therapy needs of any patient with movement dysfunction.
7. Properly document physical therapy assessment, plan of care and produce any other documents necessary for any patient receiving physical therapy services.
9. Demonstrate management skills including strategic planning, organizing, supervising, delegating, managing resources, and adhering to legal/regulatory requirements.
10. Evaluate patient or community needs and create programs of prevention and health promotion in a variety of client populations and settings.
11. Advocate for patients and member of the community to improve access to health care and health outcomes.
12. Analyze the impact and influence of lifestyle, socioeconomic class, culture, beliefs, race, and abilities of patients and colleagues to develop appropriate and effective interventions.
13. Identify and analyze factors which affect the overall health of society, its healthcare policies, access, delivery and quality.
14. Assess environmental and personal factors that serve as facilitators or barriers to full community participation based on patient's goals.
15. Screen for psychosocial factors that affect patient function such as substance abuse, domestic violence and psychiatric conditions, and provide appropriate interventions.
16. Provide interventions for patients/clients and the community at large that is culturally appropriate and respectful of their preferences.

### **Affective and Communication Functions**

1. Establish professional, respectful, empathic relationships with individuals from a variety of lifestyles, cultures, ages, socioeconomic backgrounds and abilities, based on mutual trust.
2. Develop and maintain effective working relationships with professional colleagues, peers, patients/clients, families, and the general public.
3. Work effectively as part of an interdisciplinary team.
4. Effectively communicate with patients, families, colleagues and others by providing information that is appropriate for their culture, level of knowledge, and health literacy.
5. Identify the psychosocial impact of movement dysfunction and disability on the client and family; integrate these needs into all patient intervention or personal interactions.
6. Meet externally imposed deadlines and time requirements.
7. Effectively and consistently manage personal stress and the stress of others.
8. Effectively attend to people, information, and tasks in a complex, highly stimulating environment.
9. Practice in a safe, ethical, and legal manner, following guidelines as established by federal, state, and local law, the University, clinical facilities, the APTA, and related professional organizations.
10. Demonstrate responsibility for self-assessment and the development of a life-long plan for professional growth and development.
11. Accept responsibility for the consequences of one's own actions.
12. Respond to medical crisis and emergencies in a calm, safe, and professional manner.
13. Speak and write effectively in English to convey information to other individuals and groups.
14. Understand and interpret the verbal, non-verbal, and written communications of others and respond in an appropriate, professional manner.
15. Place the needs of the patient before the needs of the therapist.

### **Psychomotor Functions**

1. Safely, reliably, and efficiently perform appropriate physical therapy procedures to examine the functional skills and abilities of patients with motor dysfunction across the lifespan consistent with currently established best practices.
2. Safely, reliably, and efficiently perform physical therapy interventions consistent with currently established best practices for patients across the lifespan.
3. Effectively and consistently practice standard precautions.
4. Effectively perform CPR and emergency first aid.
5. Read instructions, manipulate and operate physical therapy equipment and monitoring devices.
6. Demonstrate appropriate body mechanics and react safely and appropriately to sudden or unexpected movements of patients.
7. Demonstrate the ability to work in an environment that requires physical activity and mobility in a way that does not compromise patient or therapist safety.

Revised August, 2011

Reference: Ingram, D. (1997). Opinions of Physical Therapy Education Program Directors on Essential Functions, *Physical Therapy*, 77(1), 37-45.