

## **THE PHYSICAL THERAPY PROFESSION REMAINS IN HIGH DEMAND**

DETROIT, MI, October 29, 2008 — October is National Physical Therapy month and to celebrate the Michigan Physical Therapy Association (MPTA) is encouraging Michigan residents to “Become a Physical Therapist or Physical Therapist Assistant.”

Even as Michigan continues to face uncertain economic times, the physical therapy profession continues to grow and offer professional satisfaction. MPTA Public Relations Director Aaron Bailey, PT, says there is an urgent need to reach potential professionals. “We are eager to communicate this message and have set a goal to reach out to 10,000 people to encourage them to consider a career in physical therapy,” Bailey notes. “Reaching this goal will help us meet the high demand for professional, licensed physical therapists both in Michigan and nationwide over the next ten years.” Michigan students and residents looking for a change in career should also consider becoming a physical therapist.

In an effort to spread their message, the MPTA is making representatives available to present at schools and career fairs across Michigan. The American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) has produced a DVD that illustrates the role of a physical therapist in professional health care, which will be shown at the MPTA’s presentations. Additionally, interested individuals are able to view the video at [www.BeAPT.org](http://www.BeAPT.org).

The Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth identified ‘physical therapist’ as one of the top 50 jobs in the state. More than 5,000 physical therapists and more than 3,000 physical therapist assistants are employed in various settings throughout the state. And, demand for physical therapists and physical therapist assistants is expected to grow by 27 percent through 2012 with an expected shortage of 2,300 physical therapists in Michigan by 2015. The US Department of Labor expects employment of physical therapists and physical therapist assistants to grow much faster than the national average over the next seven years as baby boomers continue to age.

According to research by IBIS World, college graduates ready to become physical therapists will find jobs available, both this year and in the future. Physical Therapist is among the “Hot Jobs” listed by the London’s Earth Times (April 1, 2008). “Physical Therapy will drive growth for years to come as aging baby boomers, as well as high school, college, and professional athletes often require extended periods of therapy to recover from painful injuries,” IBIS World Senior Analyst George Van Horn says.

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“Physical therapists are experts in movement and function and we serve people of all ages in our communities,” said MPTA President Peter Loubert, PT, PhD. “Our profession can best be described as ‘the science of healing and the art of caring’ and what we truly enjoy is to see our patients take those all important steps, whether big or small, towards independence.”

Physical therapists are healthcare professionals who diagnose and treat individuals of all ages with medical problems or other health-related conditions that limit their abilities to move and perform functional activities in their daily lives. Physical therapists examine each individual and develop a plan using treatment techniques to promote the ability to move, reduce pain, restore function, and prevent disability naturally, without use of expensive surgery or side effects of medication. In addition, physical therapists work with individuals to prevent the loss of mobility before it occurs by developing fitness- and wellness-oriented programs for healthier and more active lifestyles.

Physical therapists graduate with a degree from an accredited physical therapy program. The minimum educational requirement is a master's degree, yet most educational programs now offer the doctor of physical therapy degree. Physical therapists must pass a national licensure examination administered by the state in which he or she practices.

Schools interested in having a member of MPTA present the opportunities within the profession can contact the MPTA office at 734-929-6075 or [mpta@mpta.com](mailto:mpta@mpta.com).

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The MPTA, a component of the APTA, is an organization dedicated to the service of physical therapists and physical therapist assistants in Michigan. Its goal is to foster advancements in practice, education and research to better serve patients within the state. For more information, visit [www.mpta.com](http://www.mpta.com).