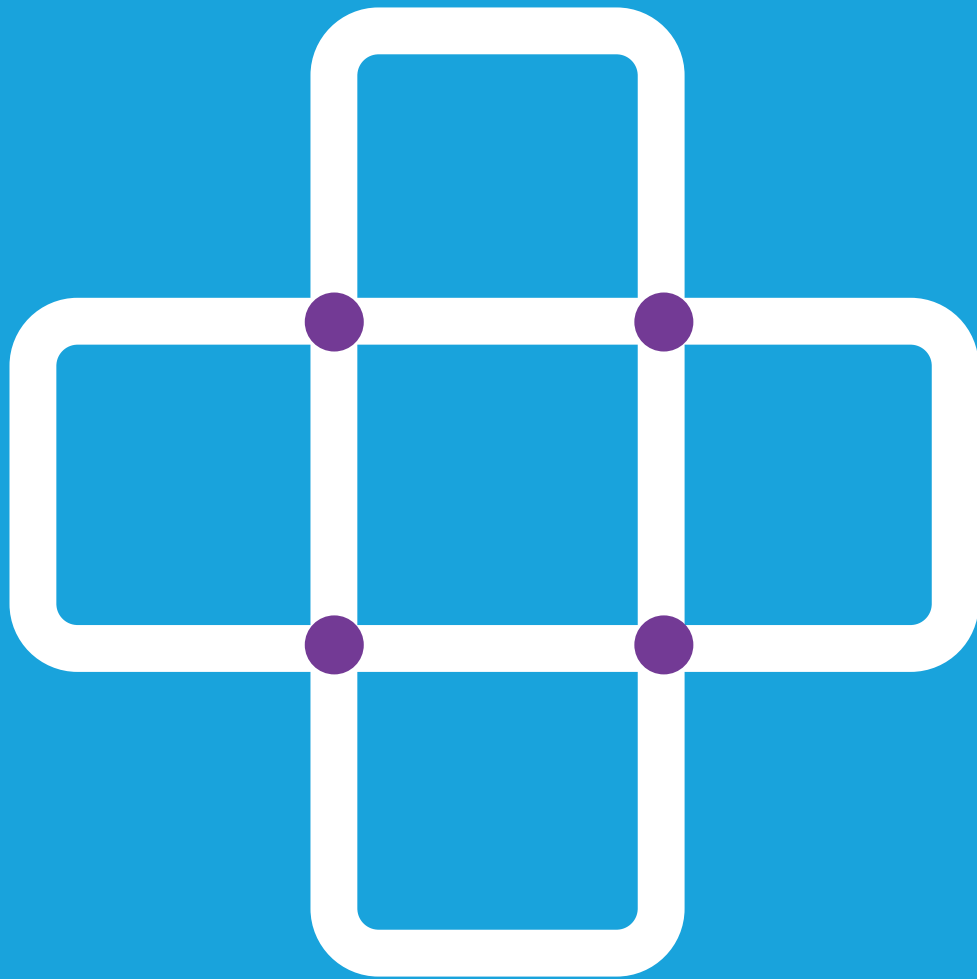


Health Care Therapy Career Guide

A guide for occupational therapists, physical therapists, occupational therapist assistants
and physical therapist assistants.



Finding Your Way to a Career: Health Care Therapy

Health care organizations rely on a wide variety of skilled therapists who specialize in various medical disciplines. These therapists can work short term with acute patients or long term with patients with chronic conditions who require continued therapeutic support. Health care therapists can work in a traditional hospital setting, in dedicated therapy outpatient offices, or in patients' homes or places of work.

How to use this document to learn more.

As one of the Top 100 Hot Jobs for 2022, health care therapist is a promising occupation for job seekers in West Michigan. To find out if this might be a good career choice for you, use this Career Map to examine:

- Who might enjoy this kind of work.
- Qualifications needed in this career field.
- Growth potential and levels of pay.
- Valuable skills for this type of work.
- Common tools and technology used in this work.
- Occupations, responsibilities, and other job titles.

This information is drawn from national data and insights from West Michigan employers. It is meant as a starting point for job seekers and career coaches to work together in the exploration of meaningful and fulfilling careers.



Exploring Occupations in Health Care Therapy

Health care therapists play an essential role in the care and overall well-being of their patients. As a health care therapist, you might administer screening tests to determine patient abilities and treatment needs and establish treatment plans and goals for your patients. You may also collaborate with other health care professionals to provide treatment and communicate detailed medical information to patients and family members.

The Path to Success

Who might enjoy this type of work?

People who work in the health care therapist field tend to enjoy:

- Working with, communicating with, and teaching people.
- Helping or providing service to others.
- Mental problem solving.
- Working with ideas and using cognitive (thinking) skills.
- Practical, hands-on problem solving.

People who do well in this work generally perform well in such areas as:

- Responsibility
- Teamwork
- Adaptability
- Achievement
- Decisiveness

Qualifications needed in this career field.

Sample certifications include:

Occupational Therapists credential sample:

Occupational Therapist Registered, Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant, Certified Hand Therapist.

Physical Therapists credential sample: Certified Nursing Assistant, Registered Kinesiotherapy, Womans Health Certified Specialist.

Occupational Therapy Assistants sredential sample:

Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant, National Affordable Housing Professional, American Medical Technologists.

Physical Therapist Assistants credential sample:

Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant.

Growth potential.

In the West Michigan counties of Allegan, Barry, Ionia, Kent, Montcalm, Muskegon and Ottawa, there were 2,945 jobs in 2020. That number is projected to grow by at least 7% to 3,161 by 2025.

Valuable skills for this type of work.

Tasks and functions performed by health care therapists include:

- Assisting and caring for others.
- Documenting/recording information.
- Communicating with supervisors, peers or subordinates.
- Getting information.
- Making decisions and solving problems.

Common tools and technology used in this work.

Tools: ventilators, orthopedic devices, braces, household appliances

Technology: appointment scheduling software, medical health information software, computer-based training software

Mapping a Career: Health Care Therapy

Respiratory
Therapist
\$25.40 - \$31.83

Physical
Therapy Assistant
\$21.87 - \$28.32

Occupational
Therapy Assistant
\$18.13 - \$26.05

Rehabilitation
Counselor
\$14.11 - \$18.50

Physical
Therapist
\$34.76 - \$46.02

Occupational
Therapist
\$28.08 - \$38.45

Wage ranges represent 25th - 75th percentile.
Timeframes represent the typical education and experience combined.
See page 6 for detailed description of occupations.

LESS THAN 2 YEARS

2-4 YEARS

5-9 YEARS

10+ YEARS

Health Care Therapy: A Field Guide

Occupations, responsibilities and other job titles.

Occupational Therapist

These individuals assess, plan, and organize rehabilitative programs that help build or restore vocational, homemaking, and daily living skills, as well as general independence, to persons with disabilities or developmental delays.

Examples of locally used job titles: assistive technology trainer, certified hand therapist (CHT), early intervention occupational therapist, home health occupational therapist, industrial rehabilitation consultant.

Physical Therapist

Physical therapists assess, plan, organize, and participate in rehabilitative programs that improve mobility, relieve pain, increase strength, and improve or correct disabling conditions resulting from disease or injury.

Examples of locally used job titles: acute care PT (physical therapist), doctor of physical therapy (DPT), home care PT.

Occupational Therapy Assistant

These individuals assist occupational therapists in providing occupational therapy treatments and procedures. Many, in accordance with state laws, assist in development of treatment plans, carry out routine functions, direct activity programs, and document the progress of treatments. Generally requires formal training.

Examples of locally used job titles: acute care occupational therapy assistant, certified occupational therapist assistant (COTA), certified occupational therapist assistant/licensed (COTA/L).

Physical Therapist Assistants

These individuals assist physical therapists in providing physical therapy treatments and procedures.

Examples of locally used job titles: certified physical therapist assistant (CPTA), home care physical therapy assistant, home health physical therapist assistant.



West Michigan Works! is part of the statewide Michigan Works! system and the workforce development agency in West Michigan. We serve the employers and job seekers of Allegan, Barry, Ionia, Kent, Montcalm, Muskegon and Ottawa counties.

We partner with employers, educators, economic developers and community organizations to create a qualified workforce that meets our region's current and future talent needs and fuels our shared economic future.

Learn more at: <https://www.westmiworks.org/>



CareerPoint helps students and job seekers find their place in the world of work by matching interests and abilities with training, support, and meaningful and rewarding careers.

By providing training and tools, CareerPoint supports the workforce professionals who help people navigate the West Michigan job market.

CareerPoint promotes evidence-based coaching to help students and job seekers discover and follow pathways to rewarding careers. This model follows seven steps to each participant's success.

Learn more at: <https://talnetcareerpoint.org/>