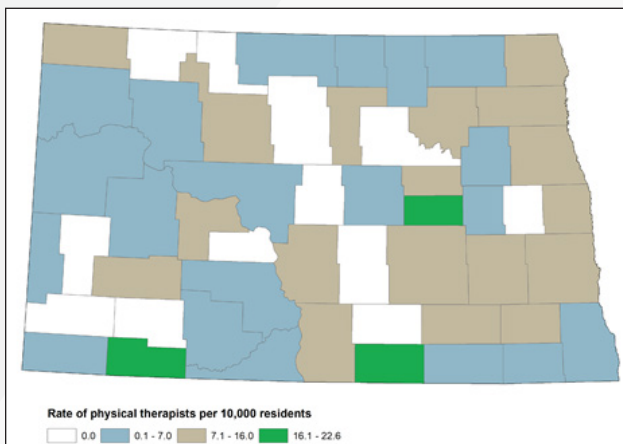


## Physical Therapists and Physical Therapist Assistants in North Dakota

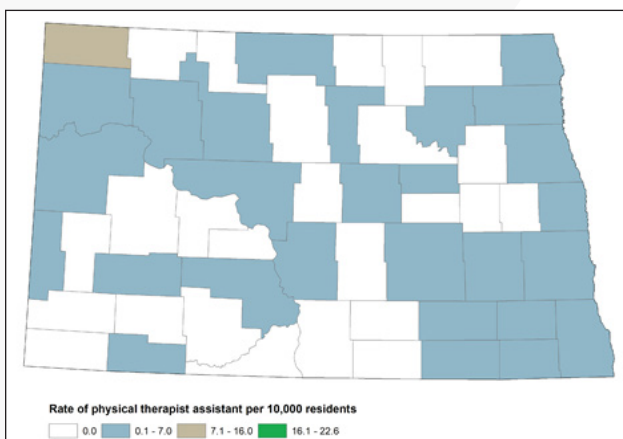
Physical therapists (PTs) and physical therapist assistants (PTAs) both work to help individuals regain or recover from physical injuries or disease conditions. PTs are movement experts trained to evaluate and treat patients based on individual needs, clinical experience and the latest research. PTs use exercise, hands-on care, and patient education to help patients who are recovering from injuries, surgeries, and different illnesses to gain movement and manage pain. PTAs work under the direction and supervision of a licensed PT to assist in executing the rehabilitation plan.

Based on licensure data from the North Dakota Board of Physical Therapy, there were 1,098 licensed providers as of 2020. This included 931 PTs and 167 PTAs.

**Figure 1. Rate of Physical Therapists per 10,000 North Dakota Residents, 2019**



**Figure 2. Rate of Physical Therapist Assistants per 10,000 North Dakota Residents, 2019**



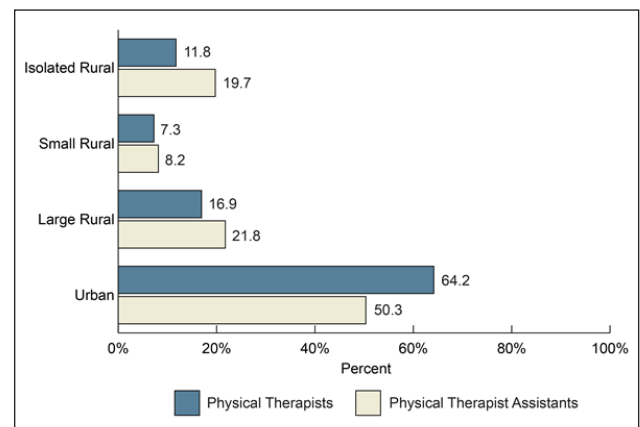
### Physical Therapy Education

- Most PTs practicing in North Dakota have their doctorate in physical therapy (DPT; 60.3%), followed by master's (23.7%), and bachelor's degrees (15.4%).
- A majority (74.7%) of all licensed PTs in North Dakota graduated from a North Dakota School.
- Most PTAs in North Dakota (98.0%) reported having an associate degree.
- Most PTs and PTAs graduated from a North Dakota school. Among PTs, 81.8% graduated from a North Dakota school; among PTAs, 32.4% were educated in the state.

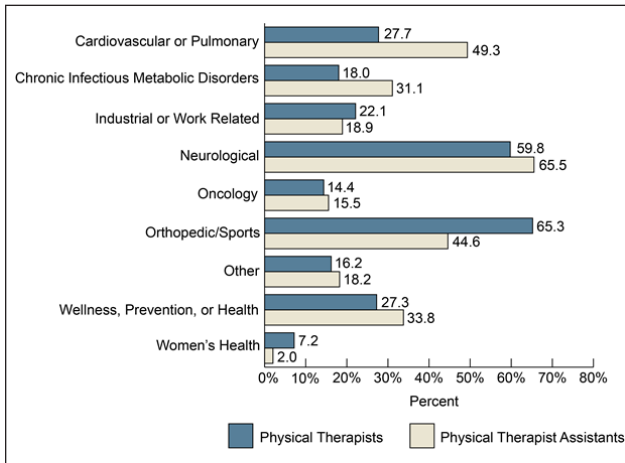
### Work Environment for Physical Therapists and Physical Therapist Assistants

The majority of PTs practice in an outpatient setting (57.9%), while a majority of PTAs practice in an extended care setting (43.9%), followed by the outpatient setting (30.4%). A majority of PTs (64.2%) worked in urban areas, compared to 50.3% of PTAs. Following urban areas were large rural areas where 16.9% and 21.8% of PTs and PTAs, respectively, were working. About 7.3% of PTs and 8.2% of PTAs worked in small rural areas, which is lower than the number of PTs (11.8%) and PTAs (19.7%) who worked in isolated rural areas.

**Figure 3. Rural-Urban Designation for Physical Therapy Professionals in North Dakota**

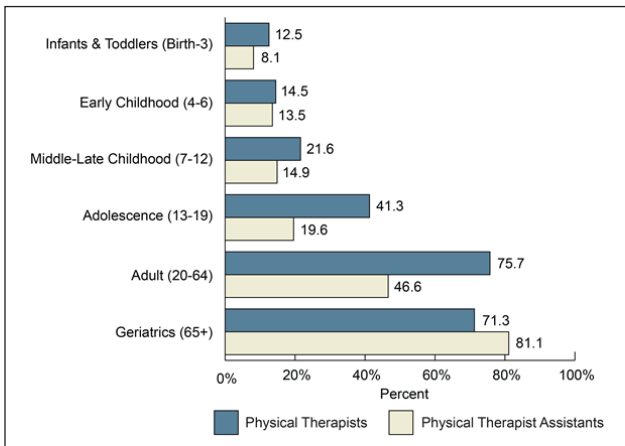


**Figure 4. Primary Patient Injury or Condition Reported by Physical Therapists and Physical Therapist Assistants**



- Figure 4 shows some of the primary injuries or conditions that PTs and PTAs may assist with. Because individuals may require more than one type of care, the total percentages will be greater than 100.0%.
- PTs were most likely to see patients with orthopedic/sports (65.3%) and neurological issues (59.8%). PTAs most often reported working with neurological problems (65.5%) and cardiovascular or pulmonary conditions (49.3%).
- Most PTs reported working with adults between the ages of 20-64 (75.7%), followed by individuals 65 years and older (71.3%) (Figure 5).
- PTAs worked primarily with those 65 years and older (81.1%), in addition to adults (46.6%).

**Figure 5. Primary Patient Ages for North Dakota Physical Therapists and Physical Therapist Assistants**



**Employment Status and Future Plans**

Of the 931 PTs, 878 (94.3%) were employed as a physical therapist. The remaining 53 PTs were either retired (n=13), employed in another field (n=9), or unemployed and seeking work within or outside of physical therapy (n=27). Of the 167 PTAs, 148 (88.6%) were employed as PTAs.

A majority of PTs (90.4%) reported no planned changes in the near future, some (4.5%) expect to increase their hours of physical therapy or direct patient care while 5.2% expect to decrease their hours or leave the field of physical therapy.

**University of North Dakota Doctor of Physical Therapy Program**

In addition to state licensure data, information was also collected among graduates of the Doctor of Physical Therapy program at the University of North Dakota. Of 2020 graduates, approximately 27.0% were employed in North Dakota, 33.0% in Minnesota, 7% in South Dakota, and one employed in other states. Most graduates practiced in an outpatient clinic, with an initial salary range between \$55,000 and \$75,000 per year.

**Conclusions**

- There were 1,098 licensed providers as of 2020. This included 931 PTs and 167 PTAs.
- 81.8% of physical therapists obtained their degree from a North Dakota school.
- PTs and PTAs were most likely to work in an outpatient setting, an acute care inpatient location, or a rehab facility. They primarily worked with clients having orthopedic/sports or neurological conditions.
- A majority (64.2%) of all PTs were found to practice in an urban area while just under half (49.7%) of PTAs practice in a rural area.

**Data**

North Dakota Board of Physical Therapy. (2020). Licensure file. Retrieved from [ndbpt.org/pt\\_licensure.asp](http://ndbpt.org/pt_licensure.asp)

UND Doctor of Physical Therapy Program. (2020). UND Physical Therapy Internal Program Data