

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON CONTINUING EDUCATION

Nevada State Board of Physical Therapy Examiners – Adopted January 29, 2009

White paper outlining definitions of "Clinical" and "Non-clinical" physical therapy practice

Clinical Physical Therapy Practice

Physical therapy practice implies that the continuing education course must meet criteria in the three categories listed below.

1. The course must address at least one topic that addresses an aspect of clinical practice directly related** to patient care along the continuum of active pathology, impairment, functional limitations and disability.
 - Core knowledge
 - Examination and evaluation
 - Prognosis
 - Diagnosis
 - Clinical decision making
 - Clinical guidelines
 - Evidence-based practice
 - Intervention
 - Wellness, health promotion and fitness
 - Outcomes
 - Psychosocial issues (e.g., mental health, gender issues, cultural issues, racial issues)
 - Risk Reduction and prevention
 - Technology
2. The course must be taught by one individual or a team of individuals who hold a comparable level of education as a physical therapist and who have:
 - Exhibited experience in the topic.
 - Demonstrated expertise in the topic.
3. The course must be sufficiently rigorous to be comparable to at least the current entry level physical therapist or physical therapist assistant practice in any areas of physical therapy practice including:
 - Hospitals (e.g., critical care, intensive care, acute care, and subacute care settings).
 - Outpatient clinics.
 - Rehabilitation settings.
 - Skilled nursing extended care, or subacute facilities.
 - Homes.
 - Schools.
 - Hospices.
 - Corporate or industrial health centers.
 - Industrial, workplace, or other occupational environments.
 - Athletic facilities.
 - Fitness centers and sports training facilities.
4. If the course is self-paced (e.g., CD, DVD, book, audio, web-based), then a sufficiently rigorous post-test must be administered.

**Courses that are tangential or indirectly related to clinical practice will be reviewed and evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Non-clinical Physical Therapy Practice

The course must address as least one topic that addresses an aspect of physical therapy clinical practice that is directly related to patient care.

- Healthcare policy
- Healthcare administration
- General healthcare education
- Healthcare teamwork
- Physical therapy documentation
- Physical therapy reimbursement
- Physical therapy safety issues
- Physical therapy employment issues
- Interdisciplinary issues involving physical therapy
- Physical therapy research
- Physical therapy case management
- Medico legal issues
- Patient satisfaction
- Language courses directly related to physical therapy practice.

Courses not likely to receive approval for clinical or non-clinical education credit

1. Courses that are:

- Beyond the scope of physical therapy practice.
- Clearly under the purview of another discipline.
- Too basic or elementary for entry-level physical therapy or physical therapist assistant clinical practice.
- Related to marketing strategies.
- About revenue generating issues.
- About issues related to an area of clinical practice for which the scientific evidence has clearly invalidated the topic covered.
- About a practice that is not accepted by contemporaneously practicing physical therapists.
- About general self-improvement (e.g., self-help courses, communication improvement courses, business practice improvement courses)
- Employment law.
- Language courses unrelated to physical therapy practice.
- University coursework unrelated to healthcare.
- Computer education courses
- Animal physical therapy related courses.

2. Courses that do not have sufficient documentation including:

- Course overview and objectives.
- Hour-by-hour timeline.
- Biosketch of the instructor(s).
- No post-test for non-onsite course.

References:

1. **Nevada Physical Therapy Board Practice Act**
2. **Guide to Physical Therapist Practice, Second Edition, American Physical Therapy Association. Physical Therapy 2001:8(1): 9-746.**