



CHECK IT OUT! CAREERS IN PHYSICAL THERAPY KEEP YOU ON THE MOVE

 Carolina Medicorp, Inc.

► Interested in a career that's one of the fastest growing in the health care field? Think about physical therapy—where your positive attitude can really make a difference in helping others improve their health and mobility.

As a physical therapist, you work with all kinds of people, from all walks of life. You might work with an athlete injured during a big game, or a toddler with a birth defect, or a senior citizen with arthritis...no two patients and no two physical challenges are alike. That means your day is always interesting!



When local high school students Jaleema Nanton and Deborah Hall posed for the pictures on this page, they acted out the roles of physical therapists at Carolina Medicorp, Inc. The students, both summer volunteers at Forsyth Memorial Hospital, discovered that what sometimes looks like play is actually an effective way to help people regain physical strength and mobility.

► WHAT'S REQUIRED FOR A CAREER IN PHYSICAL THERAPY?

A **Physical Therapist** must have a college degree. Locally, Winston-Salem State University offers a 4-year Bachelor of Science degree in Physical Therapy. The last two years of the program include hands-on experience at area health care centers. Following graduation from the program, candidates must pass state examinations to be licensed as physical therapists. Salaries range from \$35,000 to more than \$50,000, depending on experience.

To become a **physical therapist's assistant**, a two-year program of study at a community college must be completed. Forsyth Tech in Winston-Salem offers a cooperative program with Caldwell Community College in Lenoir, NC, with required classes held at both campuses. Assistants aid physical therapists with patients' exercise training and treatments. Salaries for assistants range from \$22,000 to more than \$35,000.

Physical therapy technicians, or PT aides, also assist in therapy. This position involves on-the-job training. Candidates must be high school graduates. Salaries start at about \$14,000.

To enhance your chances of being accepted into a physical therapy degree program, it helps to volunteer at a local hospital or health care center. You'll have a chance to strengthen your "people" skills and see up-close what the working world of health care is like. You might even be able to assist a physical therapist to get a first-hand look at how therapists work with patients.

Michele Grier, a physical therapist and rehabilitation development manager at Carolina Medicorp, says rehabilitation therapy is a good career choice for students who enjoy general science courses and like working with people.

"This is a profession where your attitude can really make the difference," says Ms. Grier. "When you want your patient to succeed, and you're on their side, you can make a tremendous difference. Physical therapy is a field where we really need committed, caring people."

If you're interested in learning about physical therapy as a career, contact your school guidance counselor for more information.

► Physical therapy could be the career for you—check it out!