



2021 Maryland Physical Therapy Workforce Report

Maryland Physical Therapy Board of Examiners

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2021 Maryland Physical Therapy Workforce Report

Maryland Licensing System Data

As of June 30, 2021, there were 9,147 active physical therapy licenses.

- 6,844 PTs (75%)
- 2,303 PTAs (25%)

Data Collection Overview

License Renewal Survey: The Maryland Board of Physical Therapy Examiners license renewal survey was re-launched February 5, 2021 and closed midnight of June 30, 2021. The target audience was 2021 renewing physical therapist and physical therapist assistant licensees. The survey link was located at the end of the license renewal application and was optional.

The renewal survey consisted of 16 questions. The questions did not duplicate data collected in the license renewal application. The average survey response time was 3 minutes.

Included in the 16 questions were three questions related to the use of the electronic licensing renewal system and one customer service satisfaction question.

Respondents gave a 93% customer satisfaction rating and experienced little to no renewal application technology difficulties.

A total of 1,109 physical therapists (PTs) and physical therapist assistants (PTAs) responded to the renewal survey out of 4,413 renewing licensees. The response rate of 25% meets the validity threshold of 8.75%.

Active Licensing System Database: The Maryland Board of Physical Therapy Examiners active licensing system database contains workforce information provided by licensees. Not all fields in the database are mandatory therefore data collected is based only on those that provide the information.

Additional Citations: Refer to page 16

The purpose of this pilot project is to support the Maryland Board of Physical Therapy Examiners, the public, licensees, policymakers, health systems, researchers, higher education institutions, and other stakeholders with content which will be utilized to improve access to Physical Therapy services for all Marylanders.

This pilot project report contains information gathered to address possible workforce shortages, evaluate employment potential, and the distribution of Physical Therapy practitioners in the State of Maryland.



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Introduction

What Physical Therapists Do

A Physical Therapist (PT) is a movement expert who improves quality of life through prescribed exercise, hands-on care, and patient education.

PTs diagnose and treat individuals of all ages, from newborns to people at the end of life. Many patients have injuries, disabilities, or other health conditions that need treatment. PTs also care for people who simply want to become healthier and to prevent future problems.

PTs examine each person and then develop a plan of care to improve their ability to move, reduce or manage pain, restore function, and prevent disability.

PTs have a profound effect on people's lives. They enable people to achieve fitness goals, regain or maintain their independence, and lead active lives.¹

What Physical Therapist Assistants Do

A Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) provides physical therapy services under the supervision of a PT. PTAs implement components of patient care, obtain data related to the treatments provided, and collaborate with the PT to modify the plan of care as necessary.

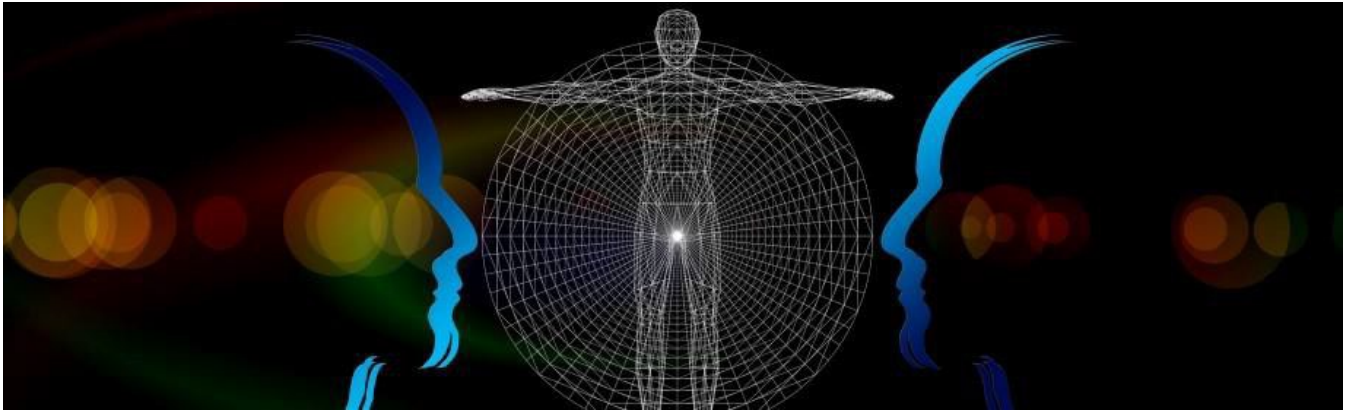
PTAs assist the PT in the treatment of individuals of all ages, from newborns to people at the end of life. Many patients have injuries, disabilities, or other health conditions that need treatment. PTAs also care for people who simply want to become healthier and to prevent future problems.

The PT is responsible for the services provided by the PTA. A PT will examine each individual and develop a treatment plan to improve their ability to move, reduce or manage pain, restore function, and prevent disability.

PTAs have a profound effect on people's lives. They enable people to achieve fitness goals, regain or maintain their independence, and lead active lives.²

¹ American Physical Therapy Association. What physical therapists do. Retrieve from <https://www.apta.org/your-career/careers-in-physical-therapy/becoming-a-pt>

² American Physical Therapy Association. What physical therapist assistants do. Retrieved from [Becoming a Physical Therapist Assistant | APTA](#)



Laws and Regulations

Maryland is a direct access state which stipulates by law a Physical Therapist may evaluate and treat patients without restrictions or a physician order. It is recommended that patients understand their insurance payment for service policies prior to evaluation.

Physical Therapists (PTs) and Physical Therapist Assistants (PTAs) must have a Maryland state license or a Physical Therapy Compact Privilege³ to practice physical therapy. The laws and regulations can be found in the Health Occupations Article – Title 13. Physical Therapists and Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) Title 10, Subtitle 38. Board of Physical Therapy Examiners.⁴ Collectively, they are referred to as the Maryland Physical Therapy Practice Act.

Maryland Physical Therapy Licensure Activities Fiscal Year 2021 (July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021)

Activity Categories	By the numbers
2021 Renewed Licenses (2-year cycle)	4,413
Applications for Licensure	898
New License Applications	697
Total Active Licensees	9,147

³ <http://ptcompact.org/>

⁴ Maryland Practice Act. Retrieve from [Pages - Statutes and Regulations \(maryland.gov\)](#)



Characteristics of the Physical Therapy Workforce

Sex and Gender Distribution

Sex refers to a person's biological characteristics. Gender refers to a person's social identity. For purposes of this report, it is unclear whether PTs and PTAs were self-reporting their sex or gender, as the options were either "male (M)" or "female (F)."

Physical Therapy		Data Sources
Female	Male	
69%	31%	Data USA (2018) ⁵
66%	34%	BLS (2019) ⁶
68%	32%	APTA (2019) ⁷
72%	28%	Maryland Licensing System (2021) ⁸

Average Age Distribution

Physical Therapy Licensee Average Age	Data Sources
39	Data USA (2018)
42	BLS (2019)
37	APTA (2019)
38	Maryland Licensing System (2021) ⁹

⁵ Data USA

⁶ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (bls.gov)

⁷ American Physical Therapy Association | APTA

⁸ Pages - Board of Physical Therapy Examiners (maryland.gov)

⁹ Pages - Board of Physical Therapy Examiners (maryland.gov)



Geographic Distribution

U.S.	Maryland
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 312,716 licensed PTs¹⁰ • 127,750 PTAs¹¹ • 95 PTs per 100,000 people and 39 PTAs per 100,000 people¹² 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6,844 licensed PTs (2.2% of PTs in the U.S.) • 2,303 PTAs (1.0% of PTAs in the U.S.) • 76 PTs per 100,000 people and 27 PTAs per 100,000 people¹³

County	Licensed	County	Licensed	County	Licensed
Allegany	1%	Charles	2%	Prince George's	6%
Anne Arundel	12%	Dorchester	0%	Queen Anne's	1%
Baltimore	15%	Frederick	6%	Saint Mary's	2%
Baltimore City	9%	Garrett	1%	Somerset	0%
Calvert	2%	Harford	6%	Talbot	1%
Caroline	0%	Howard	9%	Washington	2%
Carroll	5%	Kent	0%	Wicomico	2%
Cecil	1%	Montgomery	16%	Worcester	1%

Note: 0% Licensed = 30 or fewer licensees in the County

¹⁰ APTA Physical Therapy Workforce Analysis, 2020

¹¹ Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy (FSBPT), 2020

¹² Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy (FSBPT), 2020

¹³ Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy (FSBPT), 2020



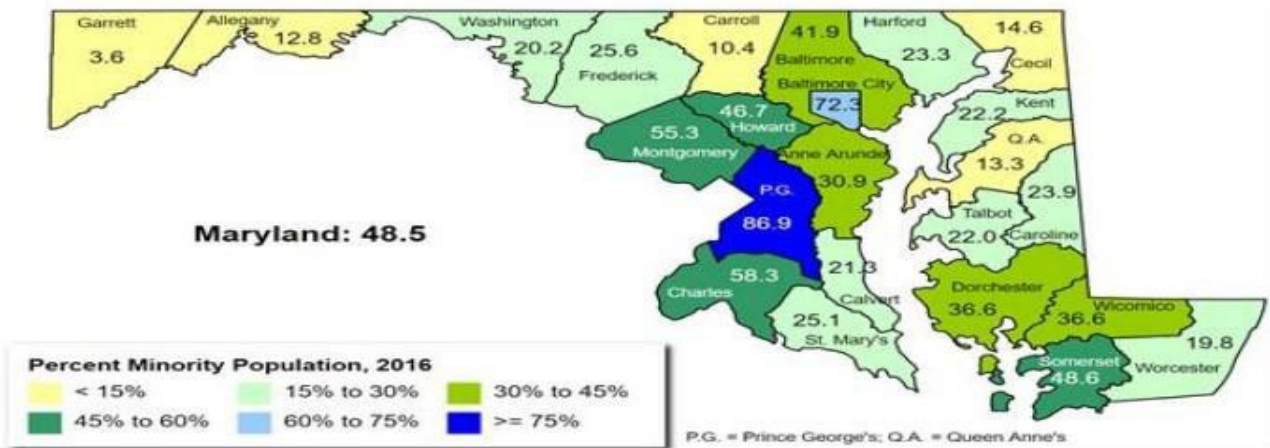
Geographic Distribution – Physical Therapy Compact Privileges 01/01/2021 – 09/30/2021

Note: Maryland participation began in 07/01/2021

Total Maryland physical therapy compact privileges purchased	33 PT 11 PTA
Maryland physical therapy compact privilege holders home states	Arizona, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Missouri, North Carolina, Oregon, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, West Virginia

Race and Ethnicity Distribution

Maryland’s Ethnic and Racial Minority Population by Jurisdiction



Data Source: US Census estimated population data for July 1, 2016, Maryland Department of Planning.

Maryland
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7th most diverse state in the U.S. • 48.5% of the population is from ethnic and racial minority groups • 32% of active physical therapy licensees are from ethnic and racial minority groups



Physical Therapy Licensees	APTA (2019)	Data USA (2018)	Maryland Licensing System (2021) ¹⁴
White (non-Hispanic)	83%	76%	68%
Asian	6%	10%	14%
Black/African American	3%	5%	12%
Hispanic	6%	9%	3%
Other	3%	2%	2%
American Indian/Alaska Native	1%	0.2%	1%

Employment Outlook

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)¹⁵, employment of physical therapists is projected to grow 18% from 2019 to 2029, much faster than the average for all occupations.

Demand for physical therapy is expected to come from aging baby boomers, who are not only staying active later in life but are susceptible to health conditions, such as strokes. In addition, physical therapists will be needed to treat people with mobility issues stemming from chronic conditions, such as diabetes and obesity.¹⁶

¹⁴ Pages - Board of Physical Therapy Examiners (maryland.gov)

¹⁵ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, May 2020

¹⁶ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, Physical Therapists, at Physical Therapists: Occupational Outlook Handbook: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (bls.gov)(June 2021)



Employment

U.S.	Maryland
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 58% of the population was employed in 2019 • Those employed were between the age of 25 to 64 years old • 5.2% unemployment rate in 2021 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 44% of the population was employed in 2019 • Those employed were between the age of 25 to 64 years old • 6.0% unemployment rate in 2021 • 70% of the renewal survey respondents employed 30 hours or more per week in 2021

DC-VA-MD-WV Employment and Wage Profile

8 th ranked Metropolitan area with highest employment level for Physical Therapists	Employment	Employment per thousand jobs	Location quotient <i>(how common a job is in a given location)</i>	Hourly mean wage	Annual mean wage
DC-VA-MD-WV ¹⁷	3,810	1.26	0.79	\$46.02	\$95,710
10 th ranked Metropolitan area with highest employment level for Physical Therapist Assistants	Employment	Employment per thousand jobs	Location quotient <i>(how common a job is in a given location)</i>	Hourly mean wage	Annual mean wage
DC-VA-MD-WV ¹⁸	1,300	0.43	0.65	\$25.44	\$52,910

¹⁷ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics, May 2020

¹⁸ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics, May 2020



Median Annual Salary

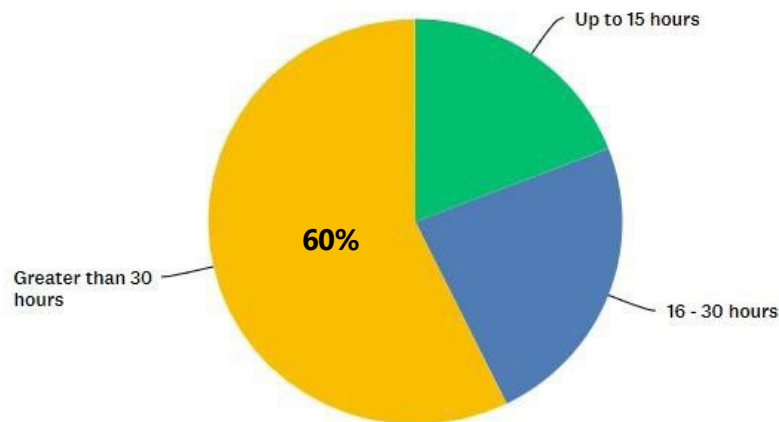
PTs	PTAs	Data Sources
\$85,000	\$52,000	APTA (2016)
\$89,440	\$58,520	U.S. News (2019)
\$95,710	\$52,910	BLS (2020)
\$91,801	\$62,403	Maryland (2021) ¹⁹

Physical Therapy Practice Details²⁰

Average number of hours/week

In your primary practice setting, select one answer to indicate the average number of hours per week worked in direct patient care (exclude non-direct patient care activities such as administration, research and teaching).

Answered: 1,109 Skipped: 0



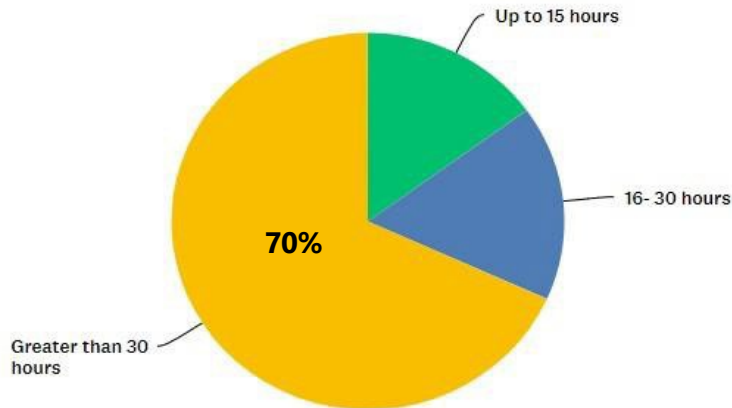
¹⁹ Salary.com (based on 2021 HR reported median data)

²⁰ 2021 Maryland License Renewal Survey results



In your primary practice setting, select one answer to indicate the average number of hours per week worked in the field of physical therapy (include non-direct patient care activities such as administration, research and teaching).

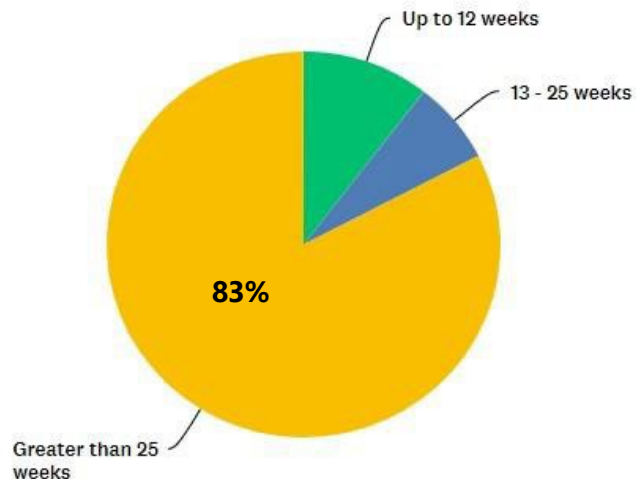
Answered: 1,109 Skipped: 0



Average number of weeks/year

In your primary practice setting, select one answer to indicate the average number of weeks per year worked in direct patient care (exclude non-direct patient care activities such as administration, research and teaching).

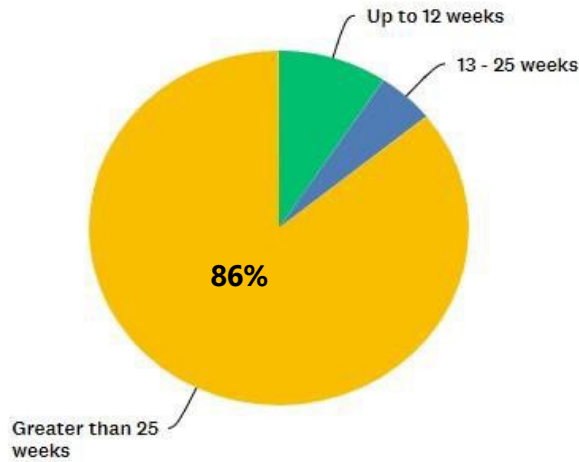
Answered: 1,109 Skipped: 0





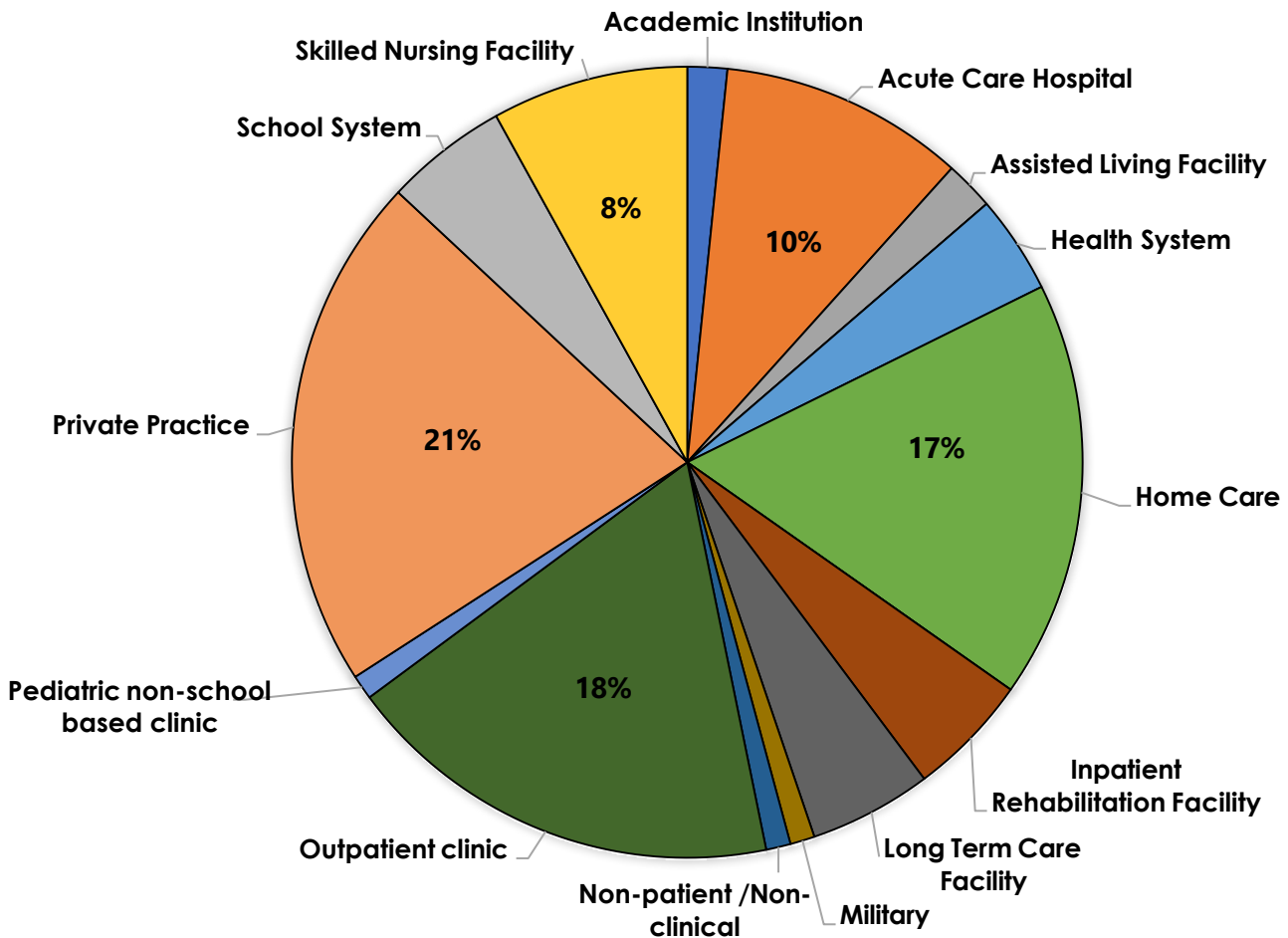
In your primary practice setting, select one answer to indicate the average number of weeks per year worked in the field of physical therapy (include non-direct patient care activities such as administration, research and teaching).

Answered: 1,109 Skipped: 0



5 of survey respondents have never changed their primary practice setting.

Primary practice setting



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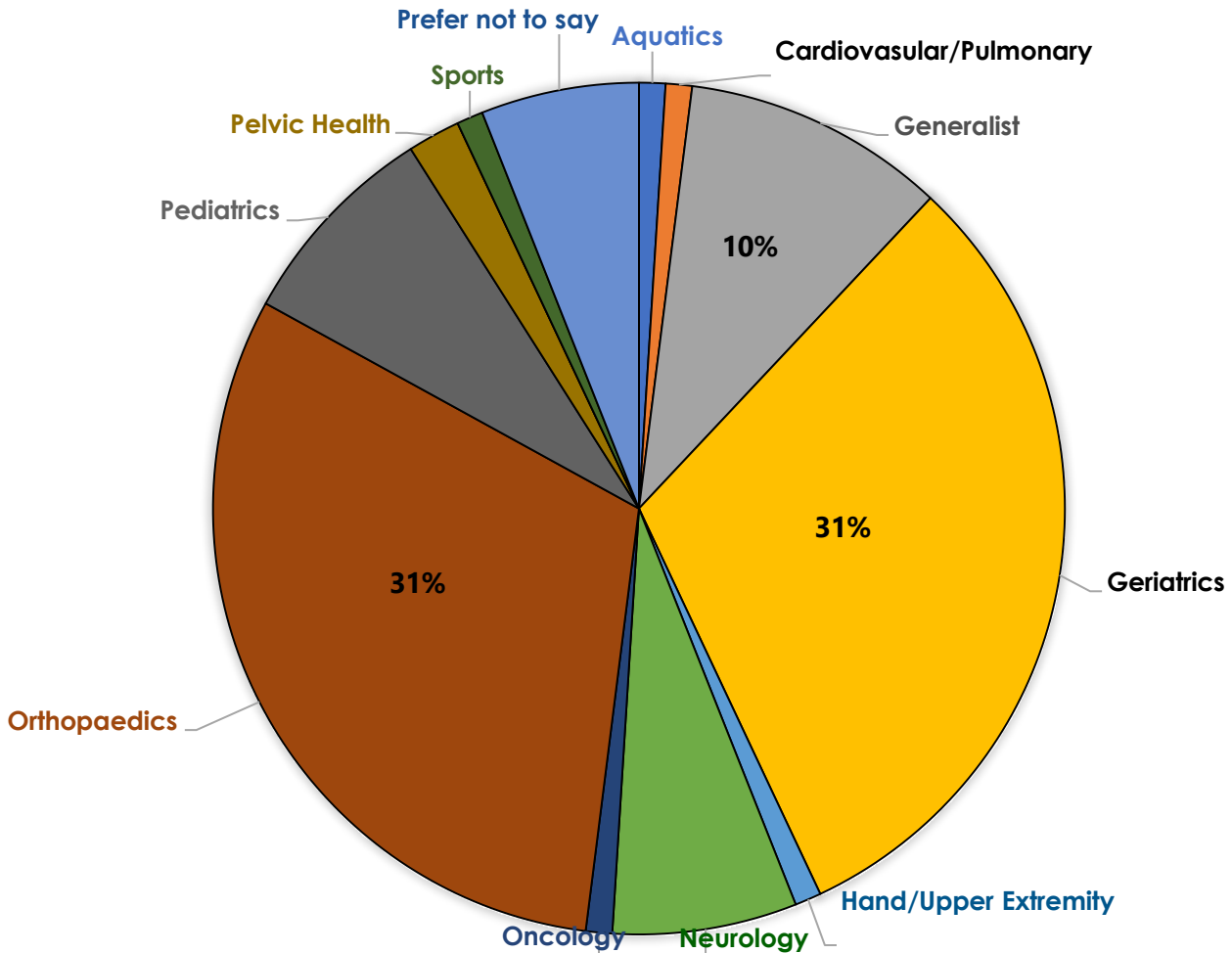


Academic Institution	2%	Health System	4%	Long Term Care	5%	Pediatric	1%
Acute Care Hospital	10%	Home Care	17%	Military	1%	Private Practice	21%
Assisted Living	2%	Industry	0%	Non-patient	1%	School System	5%
Group Home	0%	Inpatient Rehabilitation	5%	Outpatient Clinic	18%	Skilled Nursing	8%

Primary Practice Settings in the U.S. (ref: BLS 2020)

Office Settings	33%	Hospitals	26%	Home Care	11%	Nursing/Residential Care Facilities	6%
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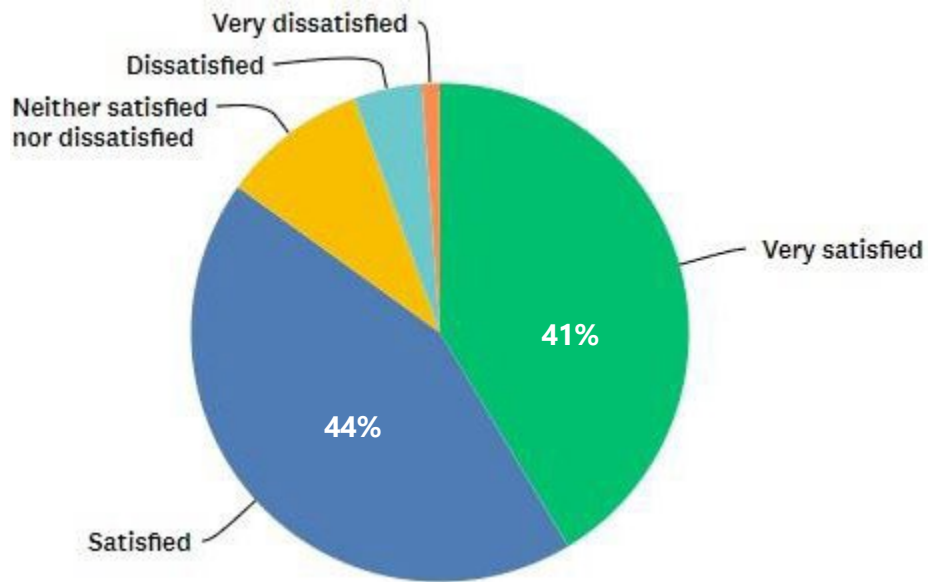
Primary Specialty





Cardiovascular/Pulmonary	1%	Oncology	1%	Research	0%
Generalist	10%	Orthopaedics	31%	Sports	1%
Geriatrics	31%	Pediatrics	8%		
Hand/Upper Extremity	1%	Pelvic Health	2%		

Working in the field of Physical Therapy satisfaction rate





In Summary

The pilot 2021 Maryland Physical Therapy Workforce report presents data from both state and national resources. We hope by presenting this useful fact-based report improved workforce planning and development will occur.

The Board of Physical Therapy Examiners is engaged in forward thinking strategic discussions to support health care access by monitoring the physical therapy workforce trends in Maryland. Through gaining a better understanding of the future of the physical therapy workforce the Board of Physical Therapy Examiners can promote and support the growth of the profession. It is important that the growth be culturally and linguistically diverse, promote continuing professional development and meet and exceed the physical therapy standards of practice to protect the health, safety, and welfare of all Marylanders.

The pilot report data analysis foresees an increase in demand for health care services that may outpace the growth of the physical therapy workforce in the next five years. Therefore, it is important to continue collecting data which the licensing system and surveys presently does and consider a few areas for further expansion. These areas may be making some existing licensing system fields mandatory and adding surveys questions such as:

- Retirement expectations;
- Average years in practice;
- Background: rural, urban, Maryland earned high school degree, Maryland earned physical therapy degree
- Licensees vs. Maryland state-wide health care workforce in FTE's
- Active licensees' educational degrees: Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) vs. Masters of Science vs. Bachelor of Science
- Employee vs. contractor
- Educational debt
- Practice opportunities

The Board of Physical Therapy Examiners looks forward to partnering with the workforce and economic development community and to becoming a recognized resource for valuable outcomes related to the physical therapy profession.



Additional Resource Citations

- (1) The Maryland Board of Physical Therapy Examiners License Renewal survey (June 2021)
- (2) The Maryland Physical Therapy Active License database (September 2021)
- (3) APTA Physical Therapy Workforce Analysis (published December 2020) www.apta.org
- (4) The U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Physical Therapist/Physical Therapist Assistant Workforce Survey (2016) www.hrsa.gov
- (5) U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) (May 2020) www.bls.gov
- (6) U.S. Census Bureau (2016) www.census.gov