



2025 Maryland Physical Therapy Workforce Report

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2025 Maryland Physical Therapy Workforce Report

The Maryland Board of Physical Therapy Examiners (“Board”) is presenting the 2025 Maryland Physical Therapy Workforce Report which aims to give a comprehensive picture of the demographic of physical therapists and physical therapist assistants (“physical therapy practitioners” or “practitioners”), the characteristics of practice settings, as well as insights into the job satisfaction of the physical therapy workforce in Maryland.

The Board piloted the Physical Therapy Workforce Report in 2021 to support the Board, the public, licensees, policymakers, health systems, researchers, higher education institutions, and other stakeholders with content that can be utilized to improve access to physical therapy services for all Marylanders. It is the Board’s goal to publish a Physical Therapy Workforce Report every five years.

The data used in the Board’s second Physical Therapy Workforce Report was collected through the 2025 License Renewal^a and the 2025 Workforce Survey^b between March and November 2025.

During the 2025 License Renewal, about half of all physical therapy practitioners licensed in Maryland renewed their license. Not all fields in the license renewal application were mandatory; therefore, the data collected from the 2025 License Renewal is based on answers of those who chose to provide it (n=3,407 to 4,369).

The 2025 Workforce Survey was an optional survey presented to the licensees at the end of the license renewal application; 34% of all renewing licensees participated (n=1,489). The Workforce Survey utilized the Cross-Profession Minimum Data Set (CPMDS), a minimum data set survey tool for health professions developed by the Healthcare Regulatory Research Institute (HRRRI), the research institute of the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy (FSBPT). The use of the CPMDS will facilitate comparison of workforce data collected by different states or healthcare professions.



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As of June 30, 2025, 9,385 active physical therapists (PT) and physical therapist assistants (PTA) were licensed in the State of Maryland. The physical therapy workforce is predominantly female with the majority falling into the age group between 30 and 59 years. Maryland has a higher number of physical therapy practitioners per 100,000 people than the national average with practitioners' density generally lower in rural areas than in urban areas.

In terms of racial and ethnic composition, Maryland physical therapy practitioners are less diverse than the general population with the majority identifying as White.

Approximately half of Maryland's physical therapists hold a Doctor of Physical Therapy degree—the current entry-level educational standard for licensure—and the remaining half possess either a bachelor's or master's degree. To be eligible for licensure all physical therapist assistants must hold an Associate of Applied Science degree. 42% of all physical therapy practitioners have earned their degrees at Maryland institutions.

Labor projections indicate strong future growth for both PTs and PTAs at the state and national levels, driven by an aging population and increasing demand for rehabilitative care. Among the many specializations available to physical therapy practitioners, orthopaedics is the most common area of specialization in Maryland, followed by geriatrics and general physical therapy. Most Maryland PTs and PTAs are engaged in direct clinical practice, work full-time and report high overall job satisfaction.

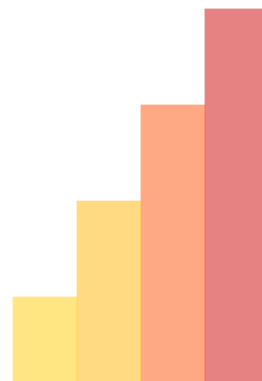


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Introduction

The Physical Therapist

A physical therapist (PT) is a movement specialist dedicated to enhancing quality of life through targeted exercise, hands-on treatment, and patient education.

Physical therapists diagnose and treat people of all ages—from newborns to those in their later years—addressing a wide range of injuries, disabilities, and health conditions. Physical therapists also work with individuals who seek to improve their overall health and prevent future problems.

Each patient receives a thorough evaluation, followed by a personalized care plan designed to improve mobility, alleviate or manage pain, restore function, and prevent disability.

Beyond treatment, physical therapists have a lasting impact on the lives of the people they serve, helping them to achieve fitness goals, maintain independence, and live active, fulfilling lives¹.

The Physical Therapist Assistant

A physical therapist assistant (PTA) provides physical therapy services under the direction and supervision of a physical therapist. Physical therapist assistants help implement treatment plans, collect data on patient progress, and work collaboratively with the physical therapist to adjust care plans as needed. The supervising physical therapist remains ultimately responsible for all services provided by the physical therapist assistant.

Physical therapist assistants work with individuals of all ages—from newborns to those at the end of life—addressing a variety of injuries, disabilities, and health conditions. They also support clients who aim to improve their overall health and prevent future problems.

Physical therapist assistants make a meaningful impact on people's lives by helping them to achieve fitness goals, restore or maintain independence, and lead active, fulfilling lives².

Laws and Regulations

Maryland is a direct access state in which patients, by law, can seek physical therapy without the need for a physician referral. This designation eliminates the administrative barrier of requiring physician approval before the physical therapist performs an evaluation and initiates treatment, making physical therapy care more accessible and often timelier for patients.

It is recommended that patients understand their insurance payment for service policies prior to evaluation and treatment.

Physical therapists and physical therapist assistants must have a Maryland state license³ or a Physical Therapy Compact Privilege⁴ (“compact privilege”) to practice physical therapy. Health Occupations Article – Title 13 *Physical Therapists* and Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) Title 10, Subtitle 38. *Board of Physical Therapy Examiners* contain the laws and regulations that govern the practice of physical therapy. Collectively, they are referred to as the Maryland Physical Therapy Act³.

Licensing Data

Maryland Physical Therapy Licensure Data

As of June 30, 2025, 9,385 active physical therapy practitioners were licensed with the Maryland Board of Physical Therapy Examiners. 7,091 of these were physical therapist licenses and 2,294 were physical therapist assistant

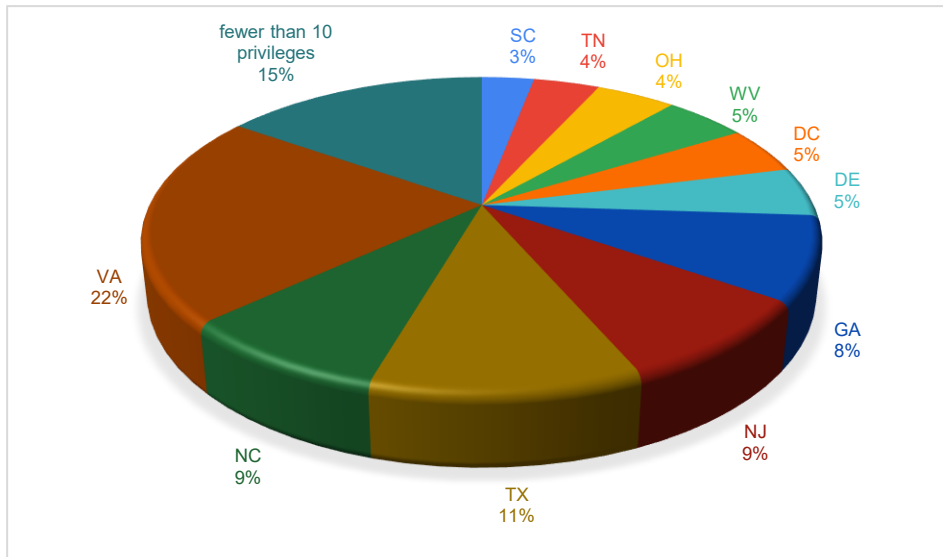
licenses. PT and PTA licenses adhere to a 2-year renewal cycle with about half of all active licenses renewing each year (Table 1).

Additionally, PTs and PTAs holding a compact privilege issued by the Physical Therapy Compact Commission are authorized to practice physical therapy in Maryland⁴. 499 physical therapy practitioners licensed in another jurisdiction held a compact privilege for Maryland as of June 30, 2025. Compact privilege holders were not included in the 2025 Workforce Survey.

Table 1: Maryland Physical Therapy Licensure Data as of June 30, 2025.

Categories	By the Numbers
Total Active Licenses	9,385
Active Physical Therapist Licenses	7,091
Active Physical Therapist Assistant Licenses	2,294
2025 Renewed Licenses (2-year cycle)	4,369

PT Compact Privileges

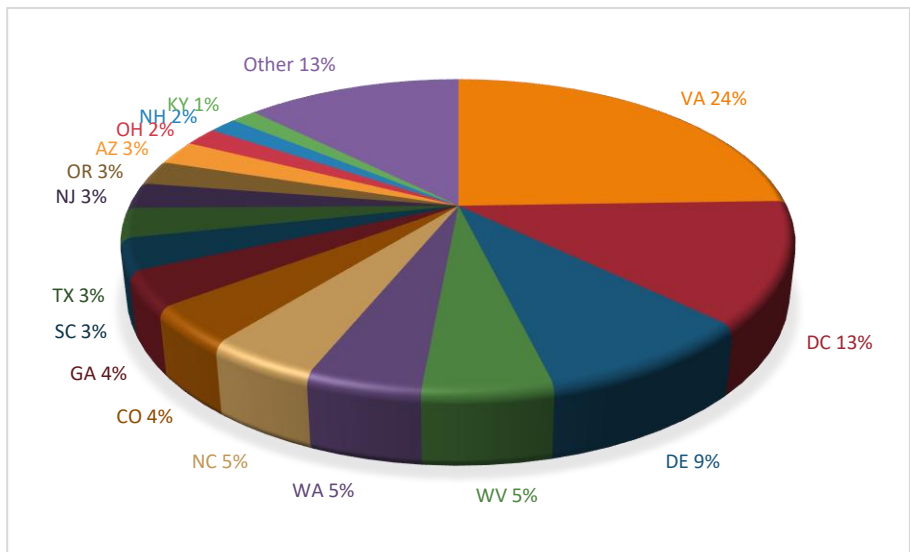


Graph 1: Home states of compact privilege holders⁵.

As of June 30, 2025, the PT Compact has 34 member states actively issuing and accepting compact privileges⁴(‡). The purchase of a compact privilege for a member state allows a physical therapy practitioner licensed in their home state to practice in that member state.

A total of 499 practitioners from 31 member states had purchased a privilege to practice in Maryland⁵ (Graph 1).

Reversely, 678 or 7.2% of physical therapy practitioners licensed in Maryland purchased a compact privilege for another member state. Almost a quarter of these compact privilege holders are authorized to practice in Virginia, followed by Washington, D.C. (13%) and Delaware (9%)⁵ (Graph 2).



Graph 2: States for which Maryland licensees have purchased compact privileges⁵.

‡ With Pennsylvania and Kansas joining the PT Compact, the number of member states actively issuing and accepting privileges has increased to 36 as of January 2026.

Characteristics of the Physical Therapy Workforce

Sex and Gender

The 2025 Renewal Application^a asked licensees to identify their sex which refers to a person’s biological characteristics. Additionally, the 2025 Workforce Survey^b asked participants to identify their gender, which refers to a person’s social identity.

The Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy (FSBPT) published a census of PTs and PTAs licensed in the United States in 2024⁶. In its Examination, Licensure, and Disciplinary Database (ELDD) the FSBPT collects licensure data from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Island. It provides sex and gender distribution data for physical therapists and physical therapist assistants nationwide.

The data on both, state level as well as nationwide, shows that the physical therapy profession is dominated by female PTs and PTAs versus male PTs and PTAs by a ratio of about 2:1. Maryland has a slightly higher ratio of female physical therapy practitioners than the United States overall (Table 2). There is no difference in sex distribution between physical therapists and physical therapist assistants indicating that the dominance of female physical therapy practitioners is not reflective of different education levels.

Table 2: Sex Distribution of Physical Therapy Practitioners in Maryland^a and the United States⁶.

	PTs		PTAs	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
Maryland	72%	28%	72%	28%
United States	67%	33%	69%	31%

Table 3: Gender Distribution of Physical Therapy Practitioners in Maryland^b.

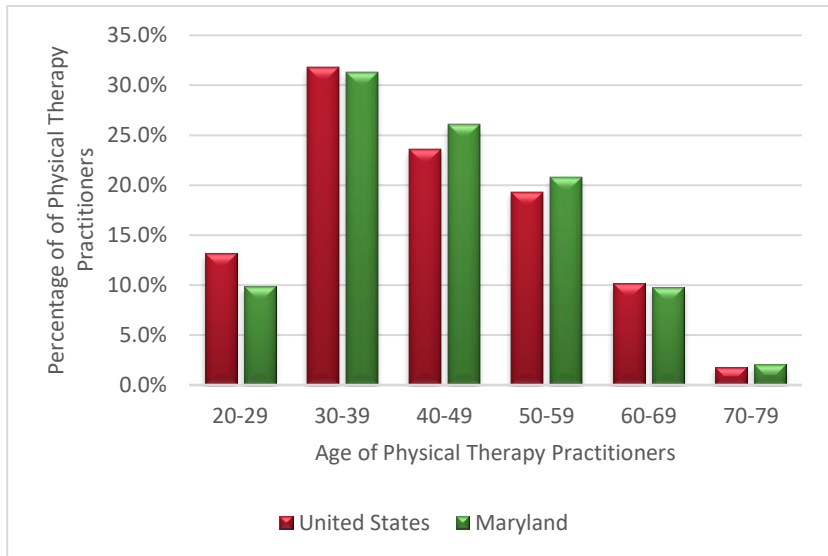
Gender	Percentage	Gender	Percentage
Male	24.5%	Genderfluid	0.3%
Female	73.0%	Other	0.3%
Transgender	0%	Preferred not to disclose	1.8%
Non-Binary	0.2%		

Gender distribution data shows that 0.7% of physical therapy practitioners in Maryland identify with a gender other than male and female (Table 3).

No comparable data is available from other sources.

Age

The age distribution of physical therapy practitioners in Maryland shows that 31% of practitioners are between 30-39 years old, 26% are between 40-49 years old, and 21% are between 50-59 years old. A small portion of practitioners stay licensed past the age of 60. The age distribution in Maryland matches the age distribution for physical therapy practitioners nationwide⁶ (Graph 3).



Graph 3: Age distribution of physical therapy practitioners nationwide⁶ and in Maryland^a.

It is noteworthy that the 20 to 29 years old practitioners represent only 10% of the licenses in Maryland (13% nationwide) suggesting that physical therapy practitioners enter the workforce at a relatively late stage in life. Physical therapists must obtain a graduate degree for licensure which typically requires four years of undergraduate studies and three years of graduate studies¹. Physical therapist assistants must obtain a two-year associate degree to become licensed². Anecdotal reports from physical therapist assistant programs indicate that many PTAs choose to become a PTA after they have either gained work experience in another field or obtained degrees in other fields. Both education pathways can cause practitioners to enter the physical therapy workforce several years after graduating from high school.

Geographic Characteristics

The FSBPT Census 2024⁶ reported the number of physical therapists and physical therapist assistants with active licenses in the United States as 444,304. In Maryland, 9,385 physical therapy practitioners hold an active license representing 2.1% of all licensed physical therapy practitioners in the United States. With population estimated to be 6,263,220 in Maryland⁷ and 342,623,630 the United States⁸, there are 150 physical therapy practitioners per 100,000 people in Maryland in comparison to only 130 physical therapy practitioners per 100,000 people nationwide indicating better physical therapy coverage in Maryland than in the United States on average (Table 4).

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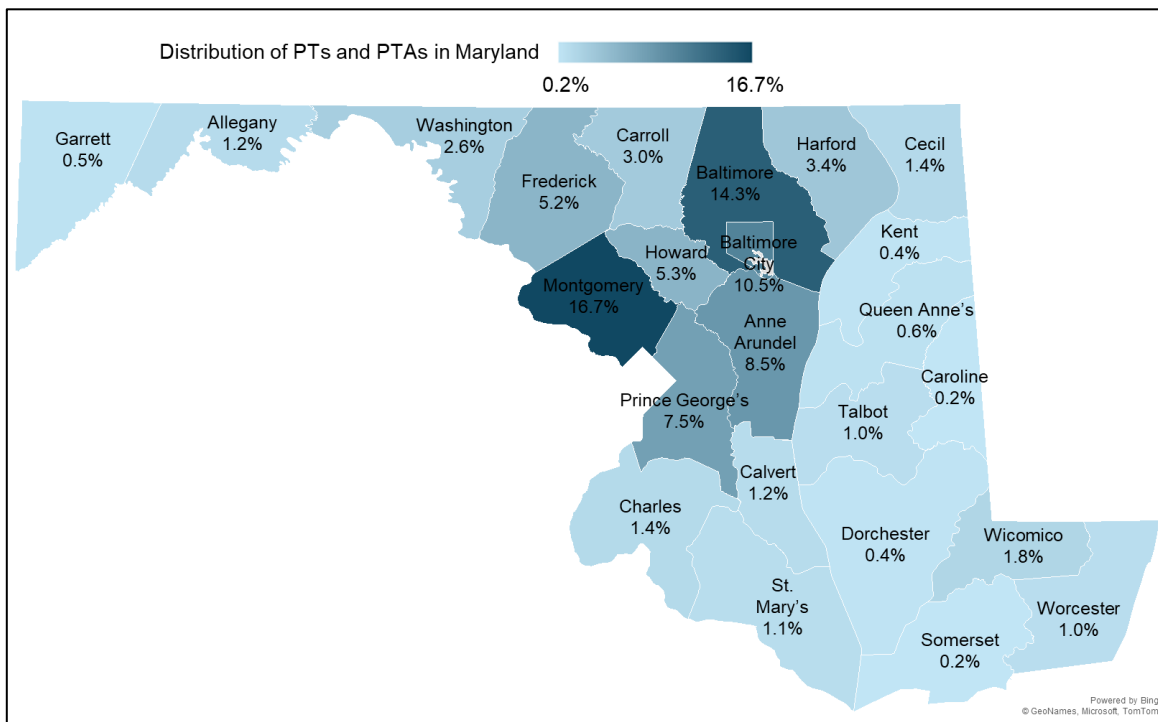
Table 4: Number of physical therapy practitioners in the United States and Maryland^{6,7,8}

	United States	Maryland
Physical Therapy Practitioners	444,304	9,385
Physical Therapy Practitioners per 100,000	130	150
Physical Therapists	312,199	7,091 (2.3% of PTs in the U.S.)
Physical Therapists per 100,000	92	114
Physical Therapist Assistants	132,105	2,294 (1.7% of PTAs in the U.S.)
Physical Therapist Assistants per 100,000	39	37

In 2023, the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) published *A Physical Therapy Profile: Demographics of the Profession, 2021-2022*⁹. In this report the APTA reports the number of physical therapists per 100,000 people in the United States as 72 which is lower than reported here. The APTA's report based its calculations on data provided by the FSBPT in 2021 and population estimates for that year. Between 2021 and 2024 the number of physical therapists increased markedly from 238,256⁹ to 312,199⁶, a 31% increase. This could account for the higher number of PTs per 100,000 people as noted in this report. For physical therapist assistants in 2021, the APTA reported 34 PTAs per 100,000 people which corresponds with the number reported here. In contrast to rapid increase of the number of physical therapists, the number of physical therapist assistants grew consistently from 111,317⁹ to 132,105⁶ (19% increase) from 2021 to 2024.

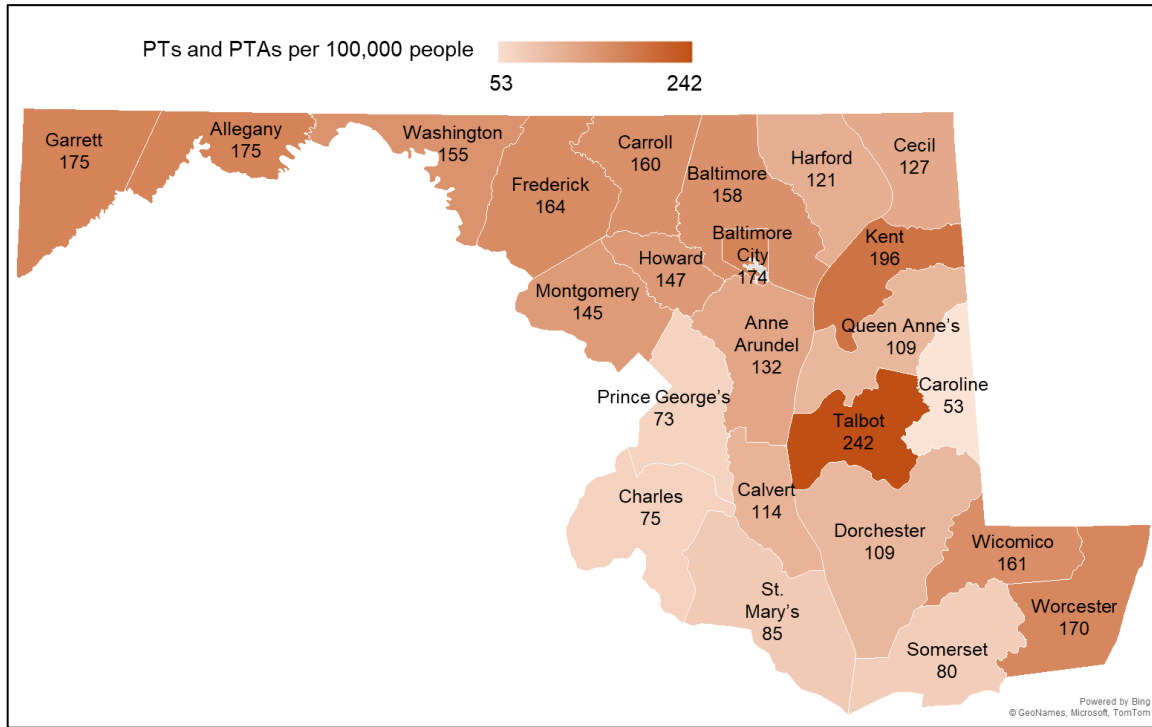
Geographic Employment Characteristic

The number of physical therapy practitioners across Maryland’s 24 counties ranges widely, with urban areas such as Montgomery County and Baltimore County having a high concentration of providers, whereas in rural counties like Kent, Somerset, and Caroline County comparatively few providers practice physical therapy (Graph 4). 697 or 16.7% of all physical therapy practitioners work in Montgomery County whereas only nine or 0.2% of all practitioners are located in Somerset County. However, population density in Maryland varies greatly by county with urban areas tending to have a higher population density than rural areas. Most southern counties—e.g. Charles, St. Mary’s, and Somerset County—have a low density of practitioners in comparison to Maryland’s western counties—e.g. Garrett, Allegany, and Washington County—which are on par with urban counties like Baltimore and Montgomery County. Nevertheless, Talbot and Kent County, both considered rather rural counties, have the highest density with 242 and 196 physical therapy practitioners per 100,000 people (Graph 5).



Graph 4: Distribution of physical therapy practitioners in Maryland^a

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Graph 5: Physical therapy practitioners per 100,000 people in Maryland. The total number of physical therapy practitioners per county was extrapolated from the results of the 2025 License Renewal Application^a; the population of Maryland's counties is based on estimates published in 2024⁷.

Race and Ethnicity

Maryland ranks as the 5th most racially and ethnically diverse state in the United States¹⁰, with more than half of population belonging to racial and ethnic minority groups¹¹. However, in the physical therapy profession, minority representation is notably lower, amounting to only 31% in Maryland^a and 25.6% nationwide⁶ (Table 5).

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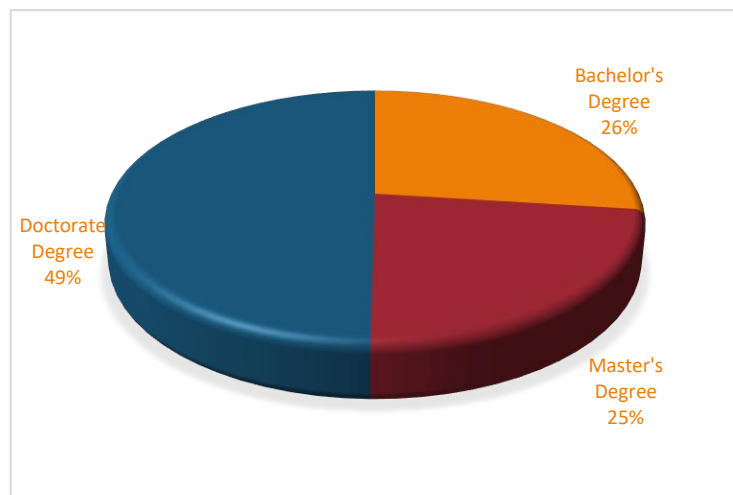
Table 5: Ethnic and racial distribution of the population of Maryland¹¹ compared to the ethnic and racial distribution of physical therapy practitioners in Maryland^a and the US⁶.

Ethnicity and Race	Maryland Population ¹¹	Maryland PT Practitioners ^a	U.S. PT Practitioners ⁶
Hispanic	11.7%	3.5%	7.0%
Non-Hispanic	88.3%	96.5%	92.9%
White	49.3%	69.0%	74.4%
Black	31.5%	13.1%	4.6%
Asian	7.1%	14.4%	12.6%
American Indian	0.4%	0.8%	0.2%
Pacific Islander	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%
Multi Race	6.2%	no data	6.4%
Other	0.2%	2.6%	1.8%

Education

Physical therapist assistants are required to hold an Associate of Applied Science in Physical Therapy degree to be eligible for licensure in Maryland^{2,3,12}. The average length of a PTA program is two years (five semesters) with approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of the curriculum dedicated to didactic and lab study and $\frac{1}{4}$ of the curriculum covering clinical education. Physical therapist assistant students spend on average 16 weeks in their final clinical experience².

Even though physical therapists were eligible for licensure in Maryland after obtaining a bachelor's or master's degree in physical therapy in the past, current national entry-level educational standards mandate a Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) degree for entry into the profession^{1,3,12}. The typical length of professional DPT programs is three years with approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of the curriculum dedicated to didactic and lab study and $\frac{1}{4}$ of the curriculum covering clinical education. Physical therapy

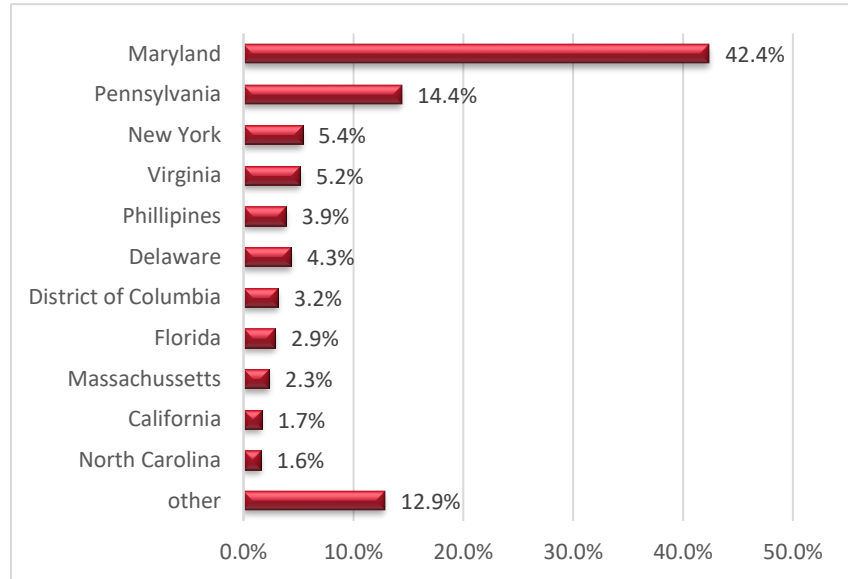


Graph 6: Percentage of physical therapists licensed in Maryland holding a doctorate, master's, or bachelor's degree^b.

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students spend on average 22 weeks in their final clinical experience¹. There remains a mix of educational backgrounds in the workforce though, with DPT degree holders constituting the majority as older generations holding bachelor's or master's degrees gradually retire (Graph 6).

Around two-thirds of all physical therapist practitioners licensed in Maryland received their degree at a college or university in Maryland and the surrounding states. 42.9% of physical therapist practitioners graduated from a university or college in Maryland, 13.8 % earned their degree in Pennsylvania and 12.8% attended physical therapy or physical therapist assistant programs in Virginia, Delaware, and Washington, DC (Graph 7).



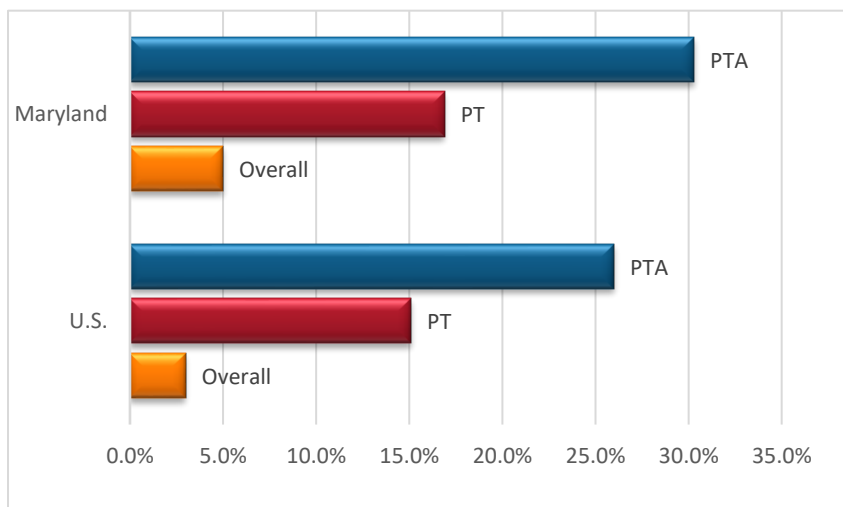
Graph 7: States in which Maryland licensees obtained their highest educational degree^b.

Employment

Employment Outlook

Long-term occupational projections show a strong increase in the national workforce for physical therapists and physical therapist assistants with a 15.1% increase in employment opportunities for physical therapists and 26% for physical therapist assistants between 2022 and 2032. This is above the average rate of national job growth of 2.8%¹³.

In Maryland, job openings for physical therapists and physical therapist assistants are projected to grow slightly more than the national job growth — 16.9% for PTs and 30.3% for PTAs¹³ (Graph 8). The demand for physical therapy practitioners will come, in large part, from the growing size of an older adult population that is remaining active longer, places more emphasis on restoring and maintaining function, and increasingly chooses physical therapy to manage chronic conditions¹⁴.



Graph 8: Expected 10-year (2022-2032) job growth for physical therapists, physical therapist assistants, and the overall job market¹³.

Salary/Wage Profile

In 2024, the most recent year for which salary and wage data are available, physical therapists and physical therapist assistants in Maryland earned annual mean wages of \$107,690 and \$67,640, respectively—both slightly above the national averages. Wages for physical therapists in Maryland also exceed those of comparable professions. On average, physical therapists in the state earn 7% more than occupational therapists and 26% more than chiropractors. In contrast, physical therapist assistants earn slightly less than occupational therapy assistants, both in Maryland and across the United States^{15,16} (Graph 6).

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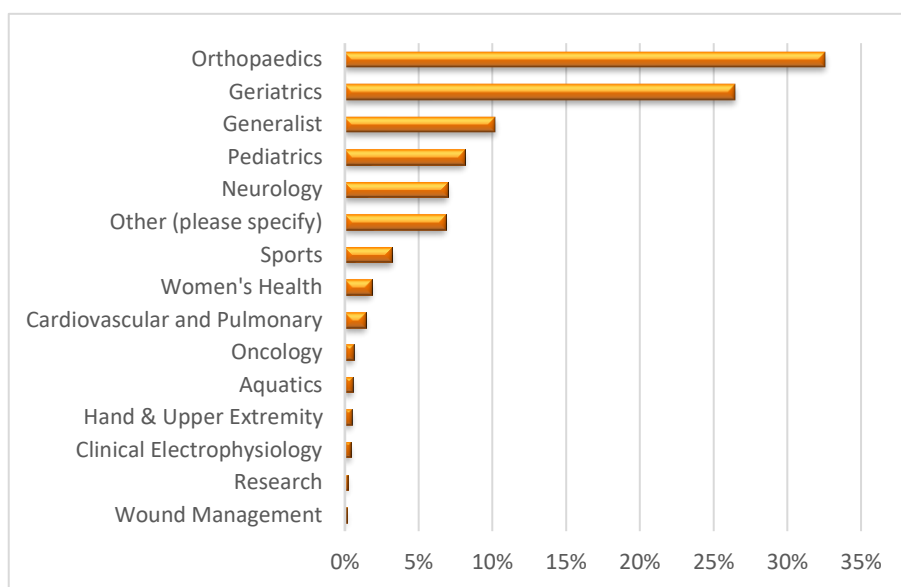
Table 6: Annual Mean Wages for PTs, OTs, chiropractors and PTAs and OTAs in Maryland and the U.S.^{15,16}.

	Annual Mean Wage				
	Physical Therapists	Occupational Therapists	Chiropractors	Physical Therapist Assistants	Occupational Therapist Assistants
Maryland¹⁵	\$107,690	\$100,860	\$85,580	\$67,640	\$73,390
United States¹⁶	\$102,400	\$98,240	\$91,830	\$67,160	\$68,540

Physical Therapy Practice Details

Specialty

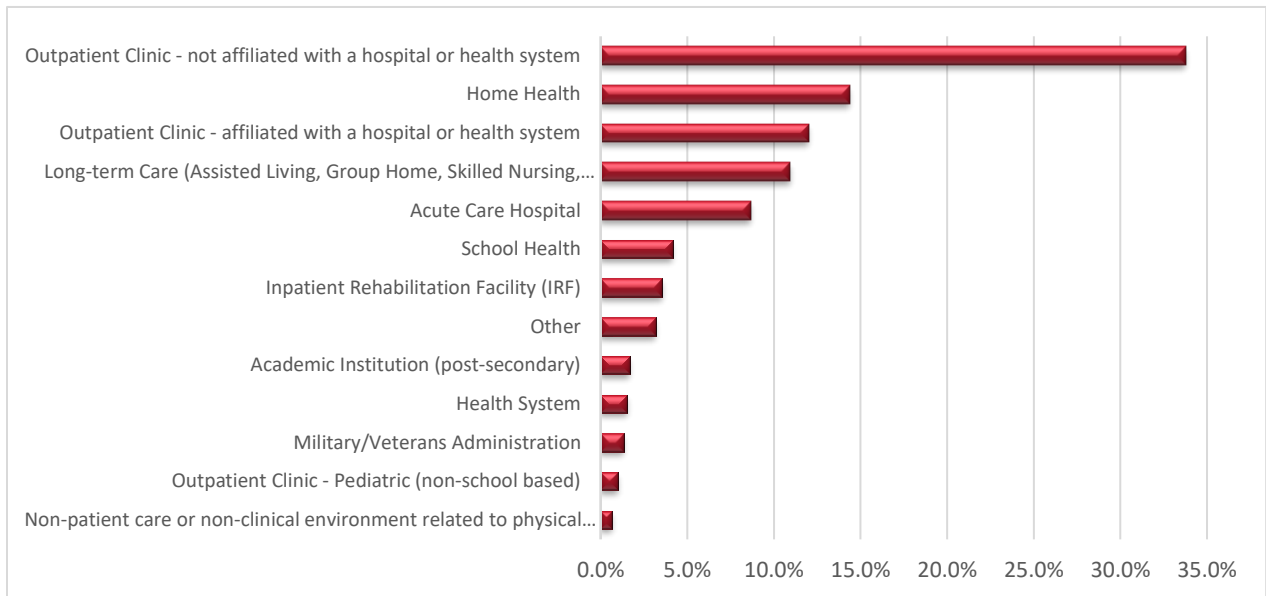
Physical therapists and physical therapist assistants in Maryland practice across a diverse range of specialties, from general practice to focused areas such as pediatric and aquatics. According to the 2025 Workforce Survey^b, 32% of participants identified orthopaedics as their primary specialty, 27% reported specializing in geriatrics, and 10% identified as generalists. Graph 9 illustrates the distribution of physical therapy specializations across the state.



Graph 9: Specialization of physical therapists and physical therapist assistants in Maryland^b.

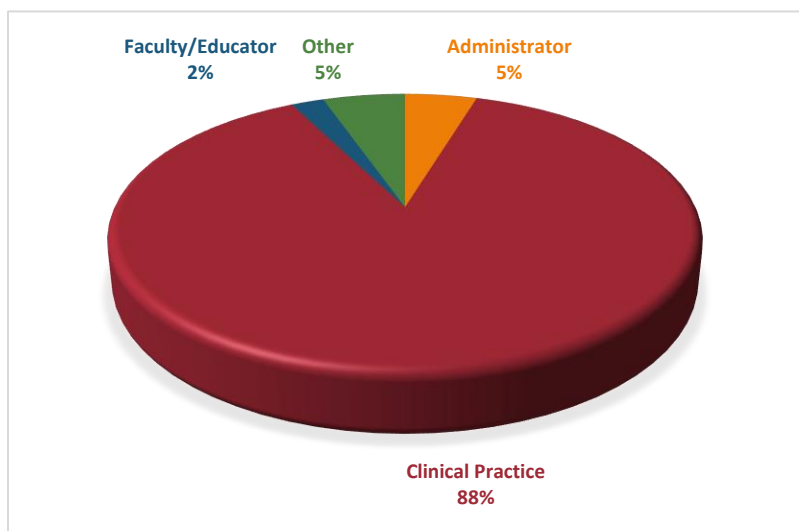
Primary Practice Setting

Physical therapy practitioners work in a wide variety of settings, among them acute care hospitals, assisted living facilities, home health, outpatient clinics, or academic or research institutions. Graph 10 below illustrates the most common employment settings among licensed physical therapy practitioners in Maryland. One-third of participants of the 2025 Workforce Survey^b reported working in private physical therapy offices that are not affiliated with a hospital or healthcare system, while 11% to 14% indicated employment in long-term care settings, outpatient clinics not affiliated with a hospital or healthcare system, and home health settings, respectively.



Graph 10: Primary practice settings of physical therapy practitioners in Maryland^b.

Within their primary practice setting, physical therapy practitioners serve in varying roles ranging from clinical practice to administrative positions in physical therapy offices or departments. The majority of practitioners work as physical therapists or physical therapist assistants in direct patient care (Graph 11).

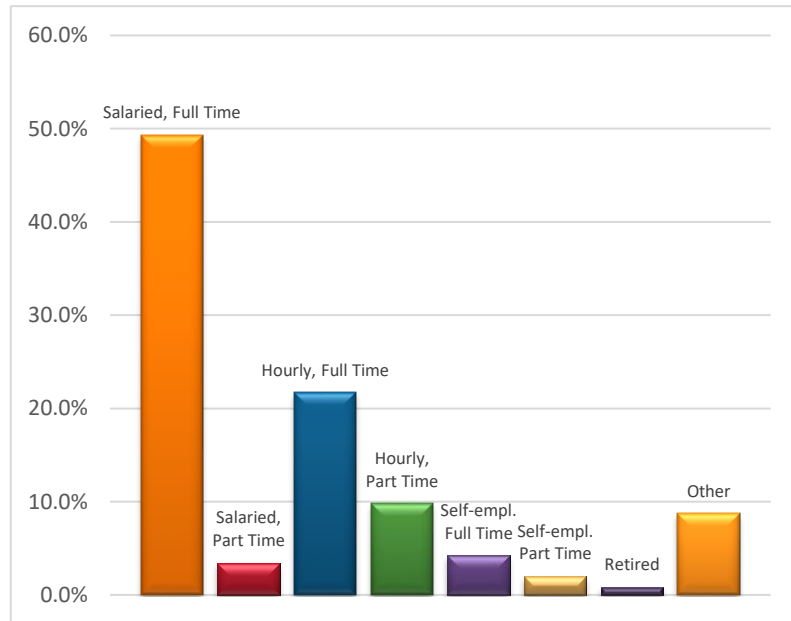


Graph 11: Role of physical therapy practitioners in their primary practice setting^b.

Employment and Activity Status

Physical therapy practitioners are employed in different arrangements, including full-time, part-time, or hourly positions.

Consistent with the definitions outlined in the American Affordable Care Act¹⁷, the 2025 Workforce Survey classified full-time salaried or hourly employee as those working 30 hours or more per week. Part-time employees were defined as those working between 15 and 29 hours per week. The survey also distinguished between employed and self-employed physical therapy practitioners.



Graph 12: Employment status of Maryland’s physical therapy practitioners^b.

Findings indicate that over two-thirds of Maryland’s physical therapy practitioners are employed—either salaried or hourly—and work full-time (Graph 12).

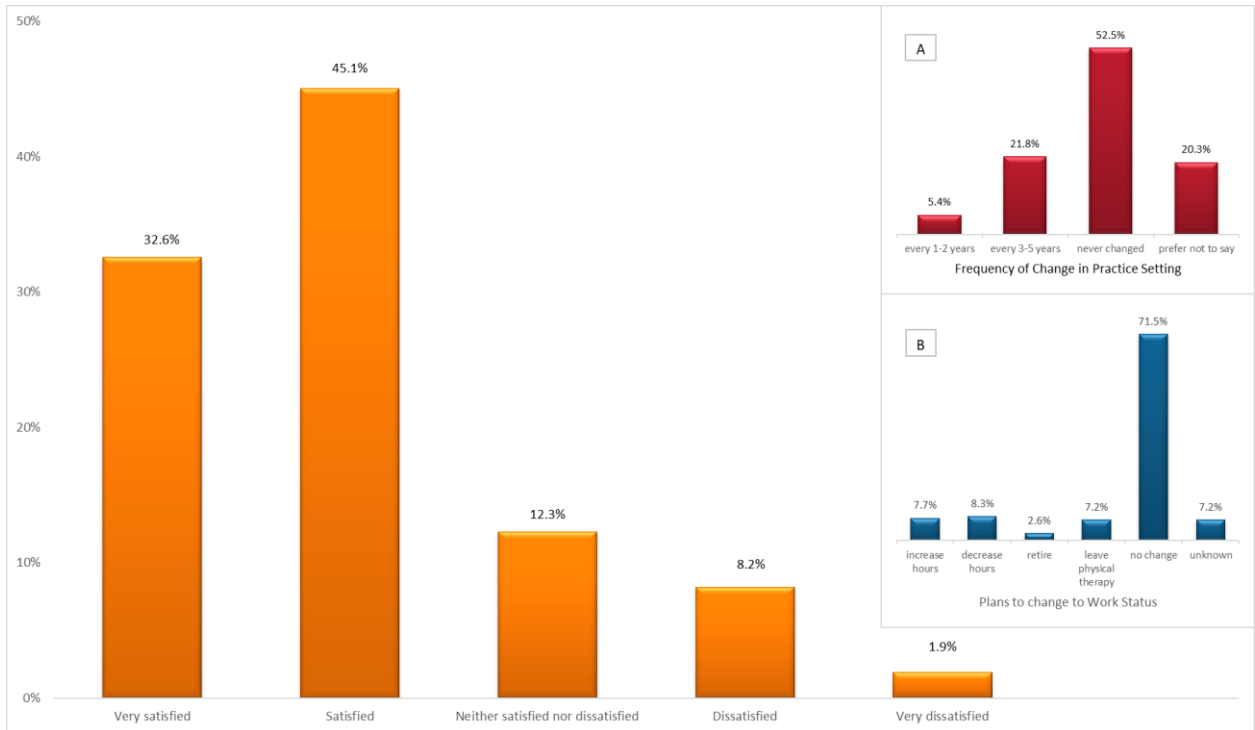
Telehealth

Telehealth is defined as “... a mode of delivering health care services through the use of telecommunications technologies by a health care practitioner to a patient at a different physical location than the health care practitioner.”, and it “... includes synchronous and asynchronous interactions.” (Health Occupations Article, §1-1001, Annotated Code of Maryland).

Telehealth, a relatively new mode of delivering physical therapy, has been included in the Code of Maryland Regulations only since 2023³. With only 18% of all Maryland licensees reporting that they are providing physical therapy care through telehealth^b, it is not a primary mode of delivering physical therapy services.

Job Satisfaction

Overall job satisfaction within a profession serves as an important indicator of workforce stability. High levels of satisfaction not only encourage professionals to remain in their field but also help attract new entrants. In the physical therapy profession in Maryland, more than three-quarters of physical therapy practitioners report being satisfied or very satisfied in their work (Graph 13). This positive outlook is further reflected in the fact that half of all practitioners have never changed their primary practice setting (Graph 13, Insert A) or do not plan to alter their current work situation (Graph 13, Insert B).



Graph 13: Work satisfaction of physical therapy practitioners in their field^b.

Insert A: Frequency of how often physical therapy practitioners change their practice setting^b.

Insert B: Physical therapy practitioners' plans of change to their work status^b.

Summary

The 2025 Maryland Physical Therapy Workforce Report presents comprehensive demographic information, an overview of the physical therapy profession characteristics, and insights into the job satisfaction of Maryland’s physical therapy professionals. The report analyzes data collected from the 2025 License Renewal and 2025 Workforce Survey, with response counts ranging from 1,489 to 4,369 practitioners per question.

As of June 30, 2025, 9,385 active physical therapists and physical therapist assistants are licensed in the State of Maryland. Among these licensees, 678 held a compact privilege to practice in another member state of the Physical Therapy Compact, while 499 practitioners licensed in other member states were authorized to practice in Maryland.

The state’s physical therapy workforce is predominantly female, reflecting national trends. Entry into the profession tends to occur at older age, with individuals aged 20–29 comprising only 13% of the workforce. The majority of PTs and PTAs fall within the 30–59 age range. With approximately 150 practitioners per 100,000 residents, Maryland exceeds the national average of 130 practitioners per 100,000. While practitioner density is generally lower in rural counties, certain rural areas maintain equal or higher coverage compared to urban regions.

In terms of racial and ethnic composition, 69% of Maryland’s physical therapy practitioners identify as White, indicating less diversity compared to the general population. Educational attainment varies by license type: all PTAs must hold an Associate of Applied Science degree, while approximately half of Maryland’s physical therapists hold a Doctor of Physical Therapy degree—the current entry-level educational standard for licensure—and the remaining half possess either a bachelor’s or master’s degree. Many of these practitioners are expected to retire in the coming years, gradually reshaping the workforce’s educational profile.

Education data shows that 42% of all Maryland-licensed practitioners earned their degrees in Maryland institutions, followed by 14% who trained in Pennsylvania. Labor projections indicate strong future growth for both PTs and PTAs at the state and national levels, driven by an aging population and increasing demand for rehabilitative care. Average annual wages in Maryland are \$107,690 for physical therapists and \$67,640 for physical therapist assistants.

Orthopaedics is the most common area of specialization in Maryland, followed by geriatrics and general physical therapy. A large majority (88%) of practitioners are engaged in direct clinical practice, with 33% working in private outpatient clinics, 14% in home health, and 12% in hospital-affiliated outpatient settings. Only 18% currently provide telehealth services.

Approximately two-thirds of Maryland’s physical therapy practitioners work full-time, and overall job satisfaction remains high, evidenced by the strong proportion of participants reporting no plans to change their work setting or employment status.

Glossary

APTA	American Physical Therapy Association
COMAR	Code of Maryland Regulations
CPMDS	Cross-Profession Minimum Data Set
DPT	Doctor of Physical Therapy
ELDD	Examination, Licensure, and Disciplinary Database
FSBPT	Federation of State Board of Physical Therapy
HRRRI	Healthcare Regulatory Research Institute
PT	Physical Therapist
PTA	Physical Therapist Assistant

Resources

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b – 2025 Workforce Survey, n=1486

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