



Executive Summary: Reentering Physical Therapy Providers - Structured Learning Options

The resource outlines a framework for reentering physical therapists (PTs) and physical therapist assistants (PTAs) to regain competence and return to practice. It targets individuals previously licensed/certified but currently unlicensed and ineligible for licensure by endorsement.

The report categorizes the critical work activities (CWAs) of a PT and PTA based on the rate of loss and recovery time, focusing on those that are non-dispositional (not an internal characteristic), easily lost, and not easily regained.

A study by the Healthcare Regulatory Research Institute (HRRI) identified rates of competency loss and recovery time for PTs and PTAs, providing a scientific basis for policy recommendations.

Method:

Subject matter experts (SMEs) were asked to evaluate each CWA based on:

1. **Loss of Competence:** How quickly minimal competence is lost over periods of disuse.
 - Rated from rapid (less than 6 months) to almost no loss (over 25 months).
2. **Recovery of Competence:** How quickly minimal competence can be regained after a year of disuse.
 - Rated from quickly (around 2 weeks) to extensive (6-12 months).

CWAs with recovery and loss ratings below 1.5 were eliminated from concern, focusing on those most easily lost and hardest to regain. Dispositional factors were also excluded, centering the analysis on non-dispositional factors.

Key Findings:

The report identifies CWAs that are crucial for reentry, requiring structured learning or job support. Job supports include tools like designated coworkers for guidance, checklists to ensure safe procedures, and documentation standards. It's essential for re-entering therapists and employers to define skill gaps and discuss necessary job supports and training beyond what is typically provided to new employees.

- **For PTs:** The document lists CWAs requiring structured relearning, such as knowledge of laws, documentation standards, and various clinical skills.
- **For PTAs:** Similar CWAs are identified for PTAs, with an emphasis on facility policies, emergency procedures, and clinical skills.

Remediation Strategies:

- **Self-Assessment:** Reentering providers should perform a self-assessment to identify strengths and weaknesses in CWAs of Concern.
- **Learning Options:** A variety of structured learning options are recommended, including continuing education, mentorship, supervised clinical practice, and self-study.



Implementation:

- **Flexibility:** The task force emphasizes flexibility in remediation, allowing regulatory boards to collaborate with reentering individuals to tailor programs to specific needs.
- **Employer Involvement:** Employers may partner in creating opportunities for remediation under board direction.

Recommendations

The SME task force recommends that regulatory boards and employers:

- Focus on CWAs that are non-dispositional and crucial for safe practice.
- Implement job supports to aid reentering PTs and PTAs.
- Define specific training needs based on individual skill gaps.
- Establish structured learning programs for CWAs identified as challenging to relearn.

This structured approach facilitates reentering PTs and PTAs regaining the required competence to practice safely and effectively. The document provides a comprehensive approach to assist regulatory boards ensuring safe and effective practice by advising and evaluating reentering PTs and PTAs in regaining necessary competencies through structured learning and self-assessment.