

CENTRAL PIEDMONT COMMUNITY COLLEGE

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS FOR: PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT PROGRAM

Students: The following are the requirements that I must be able to perform, with or without reasonable accommodations, to enter, remain in and complete the Physical Therapist Assistant program and become employable.

Category of Essential Function	Definition	Example of Technical standard
Critical Thinking/ Problem Solving	Ability to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, integrate and synthesize information sufficient for clinical judgment.	• Apply information, evaluate the meaning of data and engage in critical thinking in the classroom and clinical setting • Identify cause-effect relationships in clinical situations • Analyze and correctly perform clinical tasks within the scope of practice and transfer knowledge from one setting to another • Apply constructive feedback appropriately • Able to perform expected work within a designated timeframe. • Prioritize actions safely and efficiently. • Solve math problems with determination of time, weight, measure, flow, volume and other basic mathematical calculations (ratios, fractions, etc.)
Communication	Ability to effectively communicate using English verbal and non-verbal formats with faculty, patients, families, fellow students and all members of the multi-disciplinary team to monitor and assess patient and equipment function	• Demonstrate the ability to actively listen • Demonstrate the ability to clarify and respond to verbal and non-verbal behavior • Use professional, appropriate grammar and cultural sensitivity in written and oral communication • Utilize computers correctly, effectively and professionally to acquire information and to communicate with others • Teach patient and family to perform functional tasks and exercise programs
Interpersonal	Appropriate interpersonal interaction sufficient to work collaboratively with healthcare team, patients and families	• Discern and respond to variations of comfort level involving personal space. • Interact appropriately with all individuals, families, and groups from a variety of social, emotional, cultural and intellectual backgrounds.

		• Shows respect for individuals of different ages, ethnic backgrounds, religion and/or sexual orientation. • Employs basic conflict management skills, demonstrating professional demeanor and behavior and must perform all aspects of work in an ethical manner in relation to peers, faculty, staff and patients.
Behavioral Skills	Present self in a professional manner in clinical and academic settings, demonstrating integrity, accountability and reliability	• Demonstrate caring for others, initiative, flexibility, enthusiasm, honesty, cooperation. • Recognize personal limitations and request assistance as appropriate. • Performs duties efficiently, willingly, and thoroughly. • Demonstrate the ability to conform to appropriate standards of dress, appearance, language and public behavior. • Advocate, uphold and defend a patient's right to privacy and the doctrine of confidentiality
Emotional Stability/Coping Skills	Function effectively and adapt to circumstances including highly stressful or rapidly changing situations.	• Demonstrate ability to manage heavy schedules and deadlines; multiple priorities; and perform in fast-paced situations • Adapt to changing environment and stress. • Deal with the unexpected, capable of focusing attention on the task at hand. • Handle strong emotions calmly and professionally. • Establish therapeutic boundaries
Physical Abilities	Sufficient physical endurance to participate fully in the clinical and academic settings at an appropriate level.	• Perform patient care that demonstrates the ability to lift, push, pull and manipulate at least 50 pounds independently • Extended periods of sitting, standing, lifting and walking briskly • Perform such tasks as 2-person and 3-person lifts, taking a patient up and down steps in a wheelchair • Application of manual resistive exercise, massage, postural drainage • Stabilize/control a falling patient who is ambulating.
Motor Skills (fine & gross)	Sufficient motor function to execute movements required to perform duties with the ability to engage in skills requiring the use of gross and fine motor manipulation of arms, hands and fingers.	• Safely maneuver equipment and patients to safely perform duties within scope of practice. • Grasp small objects, pick up objects with hands • Perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation procedures

		• Ability to seize, grasp, grip, hold, turn or otherwise work with hands and fingers • Manipulate and work with fingers such as equipment controls • Goniometry (measurement of range of motion in a joint)
Sensory Abilities	Sufficient auditory, visual and tactile ability to monitor and assess health needs.	• Visual – (corrected as necessary) recognize and interpret facial expressions and body language, identify normal and abnormal patterns of movement, discriminate color changes and interpret and assess the environment up to 20 feet; Observe and measure wound depth, color, and appearance; Monitor ultrasound wattage scales; Monitor electrical stimulation voltage/ampere meters and read and understand written documents. • Auditory – (corrected as necessary) recognize and respond to soft voices or voices under protective garb, equipment/emergency alarms including safety/warning signals on traction and electrical stimulation units • Tactile – palpate a pulse and detect changes or abnormalities of surface texture, skin temperature, body segment contour, muscle tone and joint movement. Perform palpation, functions of physical assessment and those related to therapeutic interventions (e.g. massage, manual resistance).

Student Name (Print): _____ Date: _____

Student Signature _____ Date: _____

- ***Revised 4/2026***