

Is this you?

- interested in health and wellbeing
- genuine interest in people
- good communication and empathy with others
- analytical and problem-solving skills
- ability to inspire confidence and motivate people.

What is a physiotherapist?

A physiotherapist is a health professional who provides treatment for people with physical problems caused by injury, illness, diseases and ageing. Physiotherapists use a range of treatments including mobilisation and manipulation of joints, massage, therapeutic exercise, electrotherapy and hydrotherapy to reduce pain, restore function and improve an individual's quality of life.

What does a physiotherapist do?

- assess the physical condition of patients to diagnose problems and plan treatment
- use a range of techniques to strengthen and stretch muscles and joints to improve patient mobility (perform massage, hydrotherapy, breathing and relaxation techniques)
- perform spinal and peripheral joint mobilisation and manipulation
- Use equipment such as heat packs, exercise equipment, ice packs, ultrasound and electrotherapy to ease pain, reduce swelling and improve range of movement
- re-train patients to walk or to use walking frames, splints, crutches or wheelchairs
- educate patients, their families and the community to prevent injury and disability and to lead healthy lifestyles
- plan and implement community fitness programs
- treat a wide range of patients including premature babies, children with cerebral palsy, pregnant women, athletes, people undergoing rehabilitation, those needing help to recover from major surgery, heart disease or stroke, and the elderly to maintain fitness.

'Physio really chose me; I'm not a desk job sort of person, and I'm a true people person. A lot of people think physio is mostly about sports, but for me the best work is in the rehab environment helping patients recover after an accident or a stroke.'

Shailesh Maharaj, Physiotherapist



Where can physiotherapists work in Queensland Health?

Queensland Health employs physiotherapists in a variety of settings across the continuum of care from acute hospitals to clinic settings in the community. Queensland Health physiotherapists are involved in treatment, education and prevention programs and work in multi-disciplinary teams together with their patients to establish and achieve defined goals.

Can a physiotherapist specialise?

Physiotherapists may specialise in specific areas such as:

- musculoskeletal physiotherapy
- women's health
- aged care
- chest conditions
- occupational health and safety
- sports medicine
- paediatrics
- spinal injuries
- administration
- education and/or Research.

How do you become a physiotherapist?

To become a physiotherapist you have to study physiotherapy at university. Prerequisite subjects, or assumed knowledge, in one or more of English, biological science, chemistry, physics, and health and physical education are normally required. Alternatively, you could complete a relevant bachelor degree followed by a postgraduate qualification in physiotherapy. The various universities have different prerequisites and some have flexible entry requirements. Contact the university you are interested in for more information as requirements may change.

Degree and Postgraduate courses:

James Cook University – Townsville Campus:

- Bachelor of Physiotherapy, four years full time

University of Queensland – St Lucia Campus:

- Bachelor of Physiotherapy, four years full time
- Master of Physiotherapy Studies, two years full time (prerequisite courses apply).

Griffith University – Gold Coast Campus:

- Bachelor of Physiotherapy/Bachelor of Exercise Science, five years full time
- Master of Physiotherapy, two years full time (prerequisite courses apply).

Registration

In Queensland, physiotherapists need to be registered with the Physiotherapy Board of Australia before they can practise. Graduates are eligible for employment with Queensland Health once they are registered.

What scholarships are available?

There are a variety of scholarships and financial assistance available. Check out the respective tertiary institutes' website for details. Also available is the Queensland Health Rural Scholarships Scheme.

Interested in other allied health careers?

Visit the Queensland Health Work For Us website www.health.qld.gov.au/workforus for more **Careers in health** fact sheets – Allied health series:

- Occupational therapist
- Dietitian
- Radiographer
- Psychologist
- Pharmacist
- Social worker
- Speech pathologist
- Podiatrist.

Where can I find out more info?

James Cook University (Townsville)
Faculty of Medicine, Health and Molecular Science
Phone: (07) 4781 4409
Email: himstudents@jcu.edu.au
Website: www.jcu.edu.au

The University of Queensland
School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences
Phone: (07) 3365 4506
Email: studentenquiries@shrs.uq.edu.au
Website: www.uq.edu.au

Griffith University
School of Physiotherapy and Exercise Science
Phone: (07) 5552 8262
Website: www.griffith.edu.au/school/pes

Australian Physiotherapy Association (QLD)
Phone: (07) 3423 1553
Fax: (07) 3423 1778
Email: qld.branch@physiotherapy.asn.au
Website: www.physiotherapy.asn.au

Physiotherapy Registration Board of Australia
Phone: 1300 419 495
Email: physiotherapy@healthregboards.qld.gov.au
Website: www.physiotherapyboard.gov.au

The QTAC website has a list of universities and tertiary institutions with links to universities and courses offered. Go to www.qtac.edu.au and select Institutions.

To find out more about the exciting career opportunities Queensland Health can offer you go to www.health.qld.gov.au/workforus

Do great things every day