ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS FOR PHYSICAL THERAPISTS

The following information is provided to assist you in achieving a better understanding of the cognitive and physical demands of the Pacific University School of Physical Therapy and of the abilities needed to successfully work as a physical therapist (PT). These criteria are based on cognitive and physical abilities identified as being essential job functions for PTs and as such, closely match the abilities needed to successfully complete the clinical and didactic component of the physical therapy curriculum.

Essential job functions, performed either with or without reasonable accommodations, must not jeopardize safety (patient or therapist) or quality of care.

COGNITIVE DEMANDS include but are not limited to the ability to:
1. Adapt to frequent changes in work environment and patient/client population.
2. Concentrate and attend to detail amidst a variety of environmental distractions.
3. Process information accurately, thoroughly and quickly.
4. Provide clients with clear instructions, adapted to their cognitive levels and communication needs.
5. Generalize learning from one situation and patient to another, as appropriate.
6. Adapt communication style in order to work with a variety of different supervisors.
7. Interact positively with many professionals possibly including members of the multi-disciplinary team.
8. Prioritize tasks.
9. Read and compose therapy reports, clinical notes, communications to and from other professional team members.
10. Deal with a variety of patient/client ages, behavior, cognitive abilities, cultures and ethnic backgrounds both individually and in groups.
11. Learn and apply new information on methods of treatment, equipment, pathologies, etc. on an on-going basis.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS include but are not limited to the ability to perform the following activities:
1. OCCASIONALLY (1/2-2.5 hours/day): sit, stand in place, walk, twist (knees/waist/neck), climb, push/pull and lift objects of various weights.
2. FREQUENTLY (2.5-5.5 hours per day): crouch (bend at knees), stoop (bend at waist), turn/pivot, reach overhead, pinch (grasp small objects).
3. CONTINUOUSLY (5.5-8 hours per day): be mobile, grasps larger objects.

If you have a disability and need special accommodations, please contact Edna Gehring, Director of Learning Support Services, Student Services (503-352-2107). Information will be kept strictly confidential and used only to assist applicants in obtaining equal access to the application process and/or to perform essential program-related functions.
References:
2. Physical Therapist Job Description, St. Vincent’s Hospital and Medical Center, Portland, Oregon 1992.