

PT/PTA

Scope of Practice Decision-making Algorithm Guideline

An individual physical therapist's scope of practice is influenced by professional, jurisdictional, and personal scopes of practice.

Over the course of the physical therapist's career, scope of practice evolves based on considerations including, but not limited to, societal needs; progressive professional development activities of the physical therapist; modifications to jurisdictional laws and regulations; advancements in knowledge, research, clinical skills, and technology; and the evolving health delivery system.

The professional scope of physical therapist practice is grounded in basic, behavioral, and clinical sciences. It is supported by education, based on a body of evidence, and linked to existing and emerging practice frameworks. The professional scope of practice evolves in response to innovation, research, collaboration, and changes in societal needs.

The professional scope of practice consists of patient and client management, which includes diagnosis and prognosis, to optimize physical function, movement, performance, health, quality of life, and well-being across the lifespan. In addition, the professional scope of practice includes contributions to public health services aimed at improving population health and the human experience.

The jurisdictional scope of physical therapist practice is established by the Practice Act governing the specific physical therapist's license and the rules adopted pursuant to that act.

The personal scope of physical therapist practice consists of activities for which an individual physical therapist is educated, trained, and is competent to perform.

**Position of the American Physical Therapy
Association House of Delegates
HOD P06-17-09-16/HOD P06-17-08-07**

This decision-making algorithm is for informational purposes only. The guidelines do not purport to establish a standard of care or advise on a course of action for patient care in any particular situation. PT's and PTA's are encouraged to read the Practice Act found at SDCL 36-10, ARSD 20:66.

