

KINESIOTHERAPY FACT SHEET

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) provides Kinesiotherapy services to Veterans and Servicemembers through the application of scientifically based exercise principles adapted to enhance the strength, endurance, and mobility of individuals with functional limitations or those requiring extended physical conditioning. A Kinesiotherapist (KT) is a health care professional competent in the administration of musculoskeletal, neurological, ergonomic, biomechanical, psychosocial, and task specific functional tests and measures. Kinesiotherapists provide acute, sub-acute or post-acute rehabilitative therapy focusing on therapeutic exercise, reconditioning and physical education. Kinesiotherapists emphasize the psychological as well as physical benefits of therapeutic exercise for rehabilitation.

PATIENT POPULATION

Kinesiotherapists practice across the continuum of care with a wide spectrum of neurologic, orthopedic, medical, surgical, and mental health conditions, including special populations with stroke, spinal cord injury, brain dysfunction, traumatic brain injury (TBI), amputation, homelessness, and geriatric needs.



(Photo courtesy of VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System)

TREATMENT SETTINGS

Kinesiotherapy provides a full scope of services. Treatment settings include inpatient settings (including medical centers and community living centers), outpatient clinics, tele-rehabilitation and Veterans' homes.

KINESIOTHERAPY TRAINING

Kinesiotherapists are highly trained health-care professionals. Entry-level education requirements include a bachelor's degree in Kinesiotherapy or exercise science with an emphasis in Kinesiotherapy.

This education must include or be supplemented by clinical practice in a VA approved training program or its equivalent.

Kinesiotherapy promotes an environment for clinical education. There are on average, about 60 KT students participating in clinical internship across the VHA each year.

CLINICAL TRAINING PARTNERSHIPS

The Council of Professional Standards for Kinesiotherapy signed a Memorandum of Understanding January 31, 2012 to begin clinical training for masters prepared exercise science majors who have completed the core educational requirements in Kinesiotherapy.

The sites currently under review to house Center of Excellence programming are all within the VA system.



ADVANCED TRAINING

Many Kinesiotherapists have advanced skills, certification and training in specialty areas. Advanced skills include driver rehabilitation, cardiopulmonary rehabilitation, geriatrics, orthopedics, Polytrauma, and amputation.

Kinesiotherapy advanced training also includes functional capacity evaluations, therapeutic aquatics, wheelchair seating, and spinal cord injury.



(Photo courtesy of VA North Texas Health Care System, Dallas)



(Registered Kinesiologist leads a Be Active and MOVE! group telehealth physical activity session. Photo courtesy of Tampa VA Medical Center)

EVIDENCE-BASED MEDICINE

Kinesiotherapists provide state-of-the-art and evidence-based care to Veterans and Servicemembers. VA's provision of evidence-based medical and rehabilitation care is supported through a system-wide collaboration with Joint Commission, and Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities to achieve and maintain national accreditation for VA Acute Care and Rehabilitation Programs.

KINESIOTHERAPY STATISTICS

In 2014, Kinesiotherapists treated over 91,694 unique patients accounting for nearly 500,000 total encounters. VHA is the single largest employer of Kinesiotherapists, employing nearly 350 Kinesiotherapists and 25 Kinesiotherapy assistants.

Please contact your local VHA Kinesiotherapy Department with Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Services to inquire about services available. Reference www.akta.org for additional information.

For more information, visit www.rehab.va.gov January, 2015

