

FAQ: Utilization of Assistants in Hand Therapy

There are many resources available to determine the appropriate utilization of therapy assistants in the hand therapy specialty. The utilization of therapy assistants is determined through scope of practice, documentation/payer requirements, state and federal guidelines, and overall service competency. This document serves as guide for clinicians with several available resources.

What determines the appropriate utilization of assistants in the hand therapy clinic?

- Workplace policies
- State practice act
- Federal regulations
- Payer policies
- Professional association guidelines

OTA resources are available regarding utilization of assistants: (some resources located in member only sections) <https://www.ota.org/Practice/OT-Assistants.aspx>

- Guidelines for Supervision, Roles, and Responsibilities During the Delivery of Occupational Therapy Services
- Occupational Therapy Assistant Supervision Requirements (Statutes and regulations by state)

APTA resources are available regarding utilization of assistants:

<http://www.apta.org/PTACareers/RoleofaPTA/>

- Role of a Physical Therapy Assistant
http://www.apta.org/uploadedFiles/APTAorg/About_Us/Policies/Practice/DirectionSupervisionPTA.pdf

Direction and supervision of a Physical Therapy Assistant

State resources are available regarding utilization of assistants:

For state regulations and policy refer to your state website. For example:

New York: <http://www.op.nysed.gov>

California: <https://www.cde.ca.gov>

Federal resources are available regarding utilization of assistants: For federal regulation, refer to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services <https://www.cms.gov>

Medicare documentation and billing requirements can be found at the following:

<https://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNProducts/Fast-Facts/Outpatient-Rehabilitation-Therapy-Services>

<https://www.cms.gov/Regulations-andGuidance/Guidance/Manuals/downloads/bp102c15.PDF>

References:

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