

## What does a physiotherapist do?

If you're a people person interested in improving physical health, physiotherapy could be the career for you! As a physiotherapist you'll help patients with physical difficulties resulting from illness, injury, disability or ageing to improve their movement. You will devise and review treatment programmes using manual therapy (such as massage), therapeutic exercise and electrotherapy. As well as treating a variety of patients, you'll also promote their health and wellbeing and provide advice on how to avoid injury and self-manage long-term conditions. The variety makes physiotherapy a very rewarding and diverse profession.

## Salary

Physiotherapists with up to six years' experience usually earn \$47,000 to \$68,000 per year. Those with more than six years' experience usually earn \$68,000 to \$99,000 per year.

## What subjects do I need to take at school?

- ❖ Biology
- ❖ Chemistry
- ❖ Health
- ❖ Physics
- ❖ Physical Education

## How do I get into it?

To become a physiotherapist you need:

- ✓ a Bachelor's degree in Physiotherapy
- ✓ to register with New Zealand Physiotherapy Board
- ✓ have a current Annual Practising Certificate

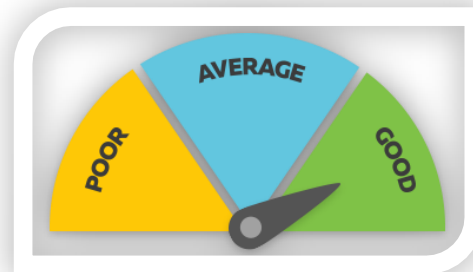
Degrees are available from two universities- AUT and University of Otago. Both courses take four years and consist of a first year studying common health science and three years studying physiotherapy. To specialise in a particular area of physiotherapy you need to complete a portfolio assessment, a practical clinical assessment, and a panel review with the New Zealand Physiotherapy Board.

## ***Interpersonal Skills***

A physiotherapist must also be:

- ❖ supportive and positive
- ❖ able to gain people's trust and work with a team
- ❖ good listeners and communicators
- ❖ understanding of diverse cultures
- ❖ good at planning and organising

Useful experience to fill this role includes work as a nurse aide or physiotherapy assistant, occupational health nursing, counseling experience, and any other work in the health sector.



### **Will I get a job after training?**

Physiotherapists are in demand to treat a growing and ageing population. Physiotherapists appear on Immigration New Zealand's long-term skill shortage list. This means the Government is actively encouraging skilled physiotherapists from overseas to work in New Zealand. Physiotherapists work in public and private health organisation and about a third of physiotherapists are self-employed. This role may move into teaching and research, progress into management or specialise in a specific area, such as cardiorespiratory, women's health, pain management, and sports to name a few.

### **Where can I find out more?**

- **Physiotherapy New Zealand**  
(04) 801 6500 <http://physiotherapy.org.nz/>