

BACKGROUND

**Edison Community College
Associate of Applied Science in Physical Therapist Assistant**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY/RECOMMENDATION

**This program clearly meets Regents' standards for associate degree programs.
There were no serious concerns raised in this review.**

Request: Edison Community College proposes an Associate of Applied Science degree in Physical Therapist Assistant in response to the growing need for physical therapist assistants. As Ohio's elderly population and baby-boomer generation enters the age where they are vulnerable to chronic and debilitating conditions, they are more likely to need the services of a professionally trained physical therapist assistant.

A physical therapist assistant, under the supervision of a physical therapist, assists in the implementation of a prescribed treatment plan that improves the patient's mobility and relieves pain. Trained physical therapist assistants can also conduct treatment interventions that will prevent and lessen the patient's physical disability. Accident victims and individuals with disabling conditions such as lower-back pain, arthritis, heart disease, fractures, head injuries and cerebral palsy also benefit from the treatment and services of a physical therapist assistant.

The U.S. Department of Labor/Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Outlook, indicates that the physical therapist assistant will be among the fastest growing occupations between 2006 and 2016. The employment of physical therapist assistants is expected to grow by 29 percent over the next five to ten years—a rate much faster than the average for all occupations. The demand for this trained professional is expected to rise, as the number of individuals with disabilities or limited functions continues to grow. The U.S. Department of Labor/Bureau of Labor Statistics indicates that the median annual salary of a physical therapist assistant in 2006 was \$41,360. The middle 50 percent earned between \$33,840 and \$49,010.

Support for program need in the region comes from the March 2008 Economic Modeling Specialists, Inc., (EMSI) Complete Employment Report. This report indicated that, within the next ten years, the replacement rate for new and retiring physical therapist assistants is expected to increase by 29% in the counties served by Edison Community College (Darke, Miami & Shelby).

Program Purpose/Mission: The physical therapist assistant program will give students interested in a healthcare career the opportunity to become a licensed physical therapist assistant. The program will also provide the region's healthcare and medical providers with much needed physical therapist assistants.

Enrollment: Students have already expressed an interest in this proposed program and, based on current and future student interest, the College is projecting an enrollment of 29 full-time and 4 part-time students beginning January 2009. Targeted marketing efforts will be directed toward students enrolled in the various healthcare certificate programs at the Upper Valley Joint Vocational School, which is located right next door to the College. The region's College Tech Prep Programs and Seniors to Sophomores students will also be included in the marketing campaign.

Part-time healthcare employees interested in a career in the healthcare field and downsized or recently laid off individuals may also be interested in this new proposed program.

Articulation agreements are being discussed with the University of Cincinnati and the University of Dayton for students interested in pursuing a bachelor's degree in a health-related field.

Curriculum: Physical Therapist Assistant programs must meet the curriculum standards of the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE.) CAPTE is the only recognized agency in the United States for accrediting programs that prepare physical therapist assistants. CAPTE accredited programs prepare graduates for state licensure as a Physical Therapist Assistant by the Ohio Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy and Athletic Trainers Board in the state of Ohio. Edison Community College expects to receive provisional accreditation for the proposed program prior to the anticipated start date in January, 2009.

The proposed program will use the general education courses already developed by the College and will add the new technical courses required for this degree and CAPTE accreditation. The College has agreements with many of the region's health care providers and clinics to provide the required off-campus clinical practicum experience required for graduation. Due to the number of healthcare facilities, medical practices and clinics in the region, all of the two-year campuses clinical site needs are met and also have the capacity to grow and keep pace with student enrollment growth.

Faculty/Resource Needs: The Physical Therapist Assistant program will be a part of the Health and Public Service Division, which houses the College's other health science programs and the registered nurse program. The Dean of Health and Public Service will administer the proposed program. The College plans to hire a director who has a master's degree in Physical Therapy as required by the Council on Accreditation on Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE). Current full- and part-time faculty members will be used to teach the required general education and technical courses, eliminating the need for the College to hire additional faculty members.

The College recently completed a new building that houses the registered nursing and health sciences programs and that building will be able to accommodate the students enrolled in this proposed program. Students enrolled in the program will have access to the College's computer labs, library, tutorial services, financial aid resources and student support services.

Many of the regions medical and health care facilities have signed agreements with the region's two-year campuses to use their facilities as required clinical placement sites for students enrolled in various health care services programs.

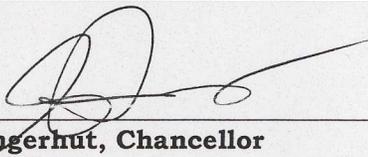
The College is financially prepared to offer this program and incur the start-up costs needed based on the projected student enrollment.

Program Duplication: Edison Community College Vice President of Education met with representatives from Rhodes State College, Sinclair Community College and Clark State Community College to relate the College's interest in the development of this program. The colleges explored opportunities for program collaboration, shared resources and shared clinical sites. The colleges continued to meet and discussed student recruitment, marketing efforts, sharing of faculty members and best practices. Working as collaborative partners in this new endeavor, the colleges were supportive of its development and extended their support for the proposed program's approval.

Students who usually attend Edison Community College reside in the area and choose to attend Edison Community College rather than drive to Springfield, Dayton or Lima.

End of Comment Period: September 25, 2008
No Comments Received, Recommend Approval

Approved:



Eric. D. Fingerhut, Chancellor

10/5/08

Date