



## Employment Outlook • August 2015

# Employment Forecast for the Physical and Occupational Therapy Workforce in South Carolina

Every two years, the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics and the South Carolina Labor Market Information office in the Department of Employment and Workforce collaborate to estimate future employment levels in terms of job availability for a wide variety of healthcare occupations. Their most recent state-level data covers the period from 2012 to 2022. Summarized below are their estimates of job growth in the fields of physical and occupational therapy over the next few years. The numbers of anticipated annual job openings include those due to growth (new jobs) and those created when people leave the workforce through retirement, career change, or for other reasons (replacements).

Physical and Occupational Therapy Occupations	Employment (# of jobs)			Total % Change 2012 - 2022	Average Annual Job Openings
	Actual 2012	Estimated 2022	Total Change		
Occupational Therapists	1,360	1,706	346	25%	53
Occupational Therapy Assistants	491	675	184	38%	30
Physical Therapists	2,854	3,792	938	33%	164
Physical Therapy Assistants	1,061	1,460	399	38%	64

*Note: The job counts in this table are based on survey data collected by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and have no relation to counts of healthcare professionals presented in the "South Carolina Health Professions Data Book."*

See [http://www.bls.gov/emp/ep\\_projections\\_methods.htm](http://www.bls.gov/emp/ep_projections_methods.htm) for the methodology used by BLS to determine job estimates.

The physical and occupational therapy fields are projected to grow rapidly, with most job openings (about 60%) expected to be from new job growth. Proportionately, job growth is strongest for assistive personnel (38%) but the largest number of jobs will be for Physical Therapists.

South Carolina education programs graduated 79 new Physical Therapists and 42 new Occupational Therapists in the 2013-2014 academic year. A total of 94 new Physical Therapy Assistants and 45 Occupational Therapy Assistants also were graduated that year.

*Data Source: Unpublished tables provided by the South Carolina Department of Commerce "2012 - 2022 Healthcare Workforce in South Carolina by Occupational Title." Graduation figures are from the Institute of Education Sciences National Center for Education Statistics "Program Major Completions 2013-2014 Health Professions and Related Clinical Sciences" downloaded May, 2015.*