Abstract

Physical and occupational therapy are both up-and-coming allied health fields within the medical profession and play an integral role in bettering the quality of lives for all types of conditions and populations. Without these therapeutic disciplines, hope for improvement and for a fulfilling lifestyle for those with disabilities would be lost. However, given the importance of both physical and occupational therapy in the recovery process for many people, it is also vital that parents, families, patients, along with current and aspiring therapists, like myself, understand the background and roles of each therapeutic practice in order to make more educated decisions on treatment. Further, because the condition of cerebral palsy is one of the most commonly treated pediatric issues by both physical and occupational therapists, being more knowledgeable about the definition, treatment options, and prognosis of the condition is quite necessary to give the best of care. As an aspiring pediatric physical therapist, I felt compelled to complete a thesis analyzing the specific components of both physical and occupational therapy, the definition and types of cerebral palsy, some general therapeutic treatment options, and the prognosis for the condition in order to better educate myself and other future therapists, along with the general population and families of disabled children.

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