



## Workforce Shortage of Rehabilitation Providers

The National Association of Rehabilitation Providers and Agencies, along with many other rehabilitation providers, is experiencing firsthand a critical shortage of qualified rehabilitation professionals (Physical Therapists, Physical Therapy Assistants, Occupational Therapists, Occupational Therapy Assistants, and Speech Language Pathologists) to meet the current demands of physicians and patients for needed rehabilitation services. The ongoing workforce shortage is due to the following factors:

1. Continued loss of qualified rehabilitation professions to non-rehabilitation jobs as a result of COVID-19 burnout and salary limitations due to the continuation of reimbursement cuts;
2. A decline in students graduating each year from accredited universities since the year 2000. Student enrollments have declined and there are not enough new graduates to fill the growing demand for rehabilitation services;
3. The aging population coupled with technology in orthopedic surgery and longer life spans has increased the demand for rehabilitation services as people want to be active and independent as long as possible;
4. Children surviving premature births who often have developmental delays and other physical defects require intense early intervention services by qualified rehab professionals; and
5. Rising costs for education making it more difficult for individuals to shoulder tuition expenses and escalating student loans.

### Impact of the Shortage of Qualified Rehabilitation Professionals:

- Demands for higher wages and benefits results in increased cost of service
- Limits access to care for beneficiaries

### What We Are Asking For:

NARA sees the shortage of qualified rehabilitation professionals as critical as the shortage of nurses and urges Congress to support the following initiatives:

1. Provide incentives through scholarships and tuition reimbursement to prospective and current students in therapy educational programs
2. Ability to bring in qualified rehabilitation professionals from other countries more readily
3. Stop reimbursement cuts for therapy services – support HR 2474

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*NARA is the trade association representing 100 organizations consisting of over 80,000 healthcare professionals dedicated to providing a multitude of skilled rehabilitation therapy services to individuals in a variety of settings including inpatient, outpatient, skilled care, assisted living, educational systems, industry/occupational health.*

### Connect with NARA

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