

Physiotherapists in Geriatrics: Attitudes, Challenges, and Perceptions of Physiotherapists in Geriatric Medical Centers in Israel

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Abstract

Background: The ongoing increase in the elderly population in Israel is expected to result in adults aged 65 and over constituting approximately 14% of the population by 2040. This demographic trend intensifies the challenge of recruiting and retaining physiotherapists to work with the geriatric population and underscores a critical issue in meeting the professional workforce needs in this field.

Objective: To identify the factors that facilitate and promote the integration of physiotherapists into geriatrics, as well as the barriers to their long-term retention in geriatric care.

Methods: An online survey was conducted among physiotherapists working in geriatric medical centers nationwide. The survey, distributed via the heads of physiotherapy departments, focused on identifying key motivators and barriers for integration and sustained employment in the geriatric field.

Results: Ninety-five physiotherapists from across the country participated in the survey. The findings indicate that career interests, opportunities for professional development, early exposure to geriatrics as students, and a supportive work environment are significant factors in encouraging entry and retention in the field. Conversely, salary was identified as the principal barrier influencing physiotherapists' decisions regarding long-term work in geriatrics.

Conclusions: Early exposure to the geriatric clinical field as students, systematic professional development from the outset, fostering a positive work environment, and improving salary conditions are essential steps for enhancing recruitment and retention of physiotherapists in geriatric care.

Keyword: Physiotherapy, Geriatric care,
Workforce recruitment, Workforce retention,
Student exposure