

APPENDIX A: DOSING CONSIDERATIONS

Considerations	Intensive A highly concentrated dosage of physical therapy intervention provided over an episode of care. Example: Weekly sessions lasting 45 minutes or more or a frequency of 2x or more/week.	Frequent A moderate dosage of physical therapy intervention provided at consistent intervals over an episode of care. Example: Weekly or bimonthly sessions lasting less than 45 minutes.	Periodic A lower dosage of physical therapy intervention provided at regularly scheduled intervals for a specified number of minutes over an episode of care. Example: 1–2x/quarter for 20 minutes per session.	Intermittent A low dosage of physical therapy intervention provided irregularly or when needed over an episode of care. Length of therapy session may vary. Example: 2–5x/yr for a total of 60 minutes
Participation restrictions. Student demonstrates restrictions of functional or foundational skills that limit participation within the educational program.	Intensive therapeutic intervention is needed to facilitate participation. Student is highly motivated and desires to participate. Participation in activity is short-term or is time-dependent (ie, walking across the stage for graduation). Consideration should be given to interventions provided to the student outside of those delineated in the IEP.	Regular therapeutic intervention is needed to facilitate ongoing participation in the educational program throughout the episode of care. Student is motivated to participate.	Participation restrictions can be addressed by a physical therapist (PT) through periodic review of accommodations, adapted equipment, classroom programs, or adult assistance.	Participation restrictions are being addressed through established accommodations, adapted equipment, classroom programs, or adult assistance, requiring only intermittent review by a PT.
Chronological age/readiness for skill acquisition. The dosage of services must reflect the potential for skill acquisition during a critical period of development and the child's intrinsic desire to participate in the educational program.	Extremely critical period when student is demonstrating emerging skills that require physical therapy intervention for further development. Student's age indicates greater potential for benefit from more intensive frequency, or the student has suffered a recent insult or injury. Intervention is typically decreased as skill is acquired.	Critical period when student is demonstrating emerging skills that require practice and/or repetition for further development. Student may be experiencing a growth spurt and may require physical therapy intervention, or may be approaching a transitional period in his/her education.	Outside of a critical period, but may have periodic challenges identified by student and/or instructional staff, or has a need for specific adaptations requiring a PT's expertise. Based upon student's age, minimal gains are expected from therapeutic intervention.	Not in a critical period, but may have intermittent challenges within the established program requiring a PT to address needs. Based upon student's age, limited gains are expected from therapeutic intervention.
Impact of therapeutic intervention. The PT utilizes evidenced-based practice and considers the student's health condition/medical diagnosis, participation restrictions, personal factors, and gross motor prognosis when determining the effectiveness of interventions and making decisions regarding the student's potential to benefit from physical therapy.	Student has potential for rapid progress toward established goals, or has potential for rapid decline or loss of functional skills. Student is highly motivated to gain a skill. This intervention intensity is typically decreased as progress slows or skills achieved.	Student demonstrates motivation and continuous progress toward established goals. Potential for regression or loss of skill could occur with reduction in service.	Student demonstrates a slowed rate of goal attainment and/or shows decline solely due to their disease process. Student participates in the classroom program with use of instructional staff providing daily support with periodic physical therapy.	Student demonstrates limited progress toward goal attainment or is near maximum benefit. Student meets new challenges associated with a change in educational/functional status with assistance from instructional staff and only intermittent physical therapy.

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Support available at the school.^a Considers the expertise/competency of other school-based providers who may support the student's participation in the educational program.	The student and/or staff require extensive support of the PT to assist the student's participation in the educational setting and progression toward goals. The expertise/competency in a specific area of need or the availability of other school-based providers to meet the needs is limited. This intervention intensity is typically decreased as progress slows, skills are achieved, or student/staff demonstrate competency.	Student requires regular support of the PT within classroom setting where support service staff is being trained to assist the student's participation and progression toward goals. Other school staff is available and can contribute to meeting the specific area of need.	Level of support within the classroom or educational setting is adequate to maintain student's skills, meet new challenges, and allow participation in the curriculum. Ongoing supervision by the PT at regular intervals is still needed to address factors that may restrict the student's ability to make steady progress toward goals. Periodic review of required accommodations or modifications continues to be necessary.	Student is able to participate in the educational program with use of support services of available instructional staff, providers, or specialized programs. The student is able to meet challenges with physical therapy at irregular intervals within the episode of care. Monitored observations of student's participation may be needed on occasional basis to address modifications.
Transitions. Considers student's transition to and present level of performance in a new program, placement, or environment, as well as available supports.	Student requires the PT to assist with acquisition of significant additional skills for access and participation related to the transition. For example, student is moving to a different campus/environment where challenging routines and barriers are encountered. May be a short-term intensive need.	Student requires physical therapy for the refinement or expansion of skills related to the transition. For example, the student needs increased endurance to keep pace with peers in the new environment.	Student's level of support within the new program/environment is adequate to maintain skills, meet new challenges, and allow for participation, with ongoing supervision from the PT regarding equipment, accommodations, or modifications.	Student's level of support within the new program/environment is adequate to allow participation, with intermittent services of physical therapy to review equipment, accommodations, or modifications.
Expertise and amount of clinical decision making and problem solving needed from a PT.^a PTs are movement specialists who assist in optimizing movement for participation within the educational program.	Requires the clinical skills and problem solving of a PT for a significant part of the classroom program. Limited exercises/activities can be safely performed by student and/or implemented by instructional staff.	Requires the clinical skills and problem solving of a PT. Some part of classroom program can be safely performed by student and/or implemented by instructional staff.	Requires the clinical skills and problem solving of a PT to periodically reassess student status and update classroom program. Classroom program can be safely performed by student and/or implemented by instructional staff.	Classroom program can be safely performed by student and/or implemented by instructional staff. Clinical skills and problem solving of a PT needed for specific challenges identified by the instructional staff, student, or IEP team.

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Previous therapy intervention. Uses the principles of evidence-based practice and considers the extent of and response to previous physical therapy interventions, including school-based, medical, and early intervention services.	Student continues to make significant progress with physical therapy interventions. A new episode of care or new goal area has been identified, with student showing excellent potential for improvement with intervention. A student has not had previous therapy intervention but shows excellent potential for improvement with intervention.	Student has made steady progress with physical therapy interventions. A new episode of care or a new goal area has been identified and the student shows good potential for improvement with intervention. A student has had limited or no previous therapy intervention but shows good potential for improvement with intervention.	Student has reached a plateau in skill acquisition. May need periodic examination for signs of readiness for new skill acquisition or regression of skills.	Student has not made progress despite physical therapy interventions. May need intermittent examination for signs of regression or equipment management.
Health condition. A student who experiences a change in medical status may require modifications to school-based physical therapy services. Consideration should be given to interventions provided to the student outside of those delineated in the IEP.	A student with a significant change in health condition may initially require intensive physical therapy to address altered mobility and positioning needs, training of school staff, and acquisition/fitting of adaptive equipment.	A student with moderate or ongoing changes in health condition that impact functional abilities may require frequent physical therapy for skill acquisition, training of school staff, and monitoring adaptive equipment.	A student with stable or gradual changes in health condition may require periodic physical therapy to monitor functional abilities, adaptive equipment needs, and training of school staff.	A student with stable health condition or whose needs are appropriately managed by either the student or school staff may require intermittent physical therapy to monitor adaptive equipment and changes in educational needs.
Assistive technology (AT). AT is any item, piece of equipment, or product that is used to increase, maintain, or improve a student's participation within and access to the educational program. Intensity of physical therapy services decreases as student/staff proficiency with AT increases.	Student requires intensive physical therapy for determination of complex AT needs, including acquisition, fitting, customization, and training with new adaptive equipment. Staff requires extensive training with complex devices to ensure safe participation of the student in the classroom.	Student requires frequent physical therapy for determination of AT needs, including acquisition, fitting, and training with new adaptive equipment. Staff requires training with unfamiliar devices to ensure safe participation of the student in the classroom.	Student and/or staff use AT appropriately or needs are low tech and require minimal training. Periodic physical therapy is needed to monitor changes, safety, and maintenance.	Student and/or staff use all AT appropriately. Student or staff monitors fit, safety, and maintenance of equipment. Intermittent physical therapy is needed to monitor whether current equipment continues to meet student's needs.

^a PTs need to consult respective state physical therapy practice acts and regulations to ensure therapeutic programs are within the scope of practice and that delegated activities to unlicensed persons is permitted.

Adapted from:

Bailes A, Reder R, Burch C. Development of guidelines for determining frequency of therapy services in a pediatric medical setting. *Pediatr Phys Ther.* 2008;20(2), 194–198. doi: 10.1097/PEP.0b013e3181728a7b