

Testing Accommodations Granted on the National Physical Therapy Examinations

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Introduction

- Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990¹⁻²
 - Titles II & III: qualified persons cannot be discriminated against by public or private institutions because of a disability, including educational programs
 - Definition of Disability³
 - Essential Functions⁴⁻⁵
 - Reasonable Accommodations⁶

Applications & Interpretations of the ADA

- The outcomes of legal cases have shown how the ADA has been applied to testing procedures and interpreted over the years⁷
- *Price v. National Board of Medical Examiners* (1997)
 - Found that 3 medical students with hidden disabilities were not impaired in their ability to perform life's major functions
- *Bartlett v. New York State Board of Law Examiners* (1997, 1998)
 - Found that Bartlett was limited in major life activities of reading and learning

Existing Literature

- More common in the literature to have studies on accommodations for acceptance into college using standardized tests (i.e. SAT, ACT), but less common to find literature on national exams that provide entrance into the profession

Julian et al., 2004⁸

- Application of accommodations to standardized testing for admittance to graduate schools
- Reported disabilities were learning disabilities, ADHD, visual, hearing, mobility impairments, and psychological disabilities
- Most common accommodations were extended time and a separate room

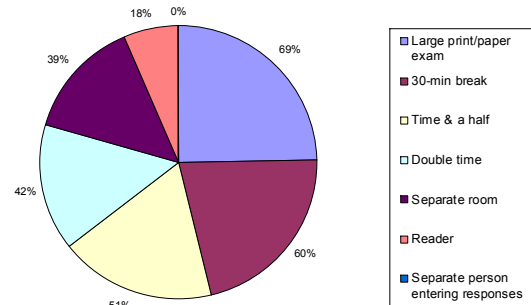
Ingram & Mohr, 2001⁹

- Accommodations for 1999-2000 National Physical Therapy Exam (NPTE)
 - 182 subjects (119 PT & 63 PTA)
- Reported disabilities were
 - Learning disabilities
 - Attention deficit disorders
 - Anxiety
 - Visual impairments

Ingram & Mohr, 2001

- Accommodations granted were extra time, a separate room, a reader, larger print, a 30-min break, a separate person entering responses
- Results:
 - Pass rates of those with accommodations:
 - PT = 52%
 - PTA = 43%
 - Pass rates of all candidates:
 - PT = 62%
 - PTA = 63%

Pass Rates By Accommodation (Ingram&Mohr)



Ingram & Mohr, 2001

- Conclusions:
 - At least half of those candidates requesting accommodations did pass
 - Average scores were less than those not requesting accommodations
- Limitations:
 - All candidate data
 - Previous attempts or multiple re-takes not considered
 - No data on performance within program (including if accommodations were provided)

Purpose

- To describe the frequency, types, and costs of reasonable accommodations granted to candidates with disabilities taking the NPTE during the years 2000-2005

Methods

- The subjects included all NPTE candidates testing during the calendar years 2000-2005 who received reasonable testing accommodations
- Research proposal was submitted and approved by the Institutional Review Board of the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

Data Received

- Calendar year
- Examination level
- ADA accommodation type
- Frequency of accommodations
- Cost of each accommodation granted
- Total number of PT and PTA examinations given per year

Data Analysis: Descriptive Statistics

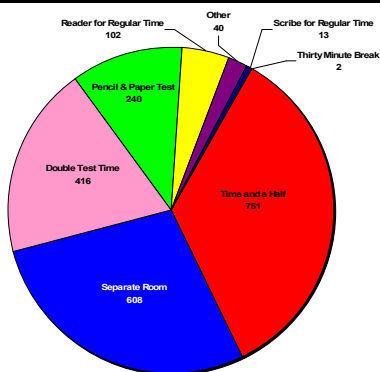
- Total number of each accommodation granted per year
- Percentage of accommodations granted per year
- Percentage of PTs and PTAs per year who took their perspective examination
- Percentage of PTs and PTAs per year granted accommodations
- Annual cost of all accommodations granted
- Mean cost of each accommodation granted per year
- Total cost of each accommodation granted per year
- Total cost of accommodations granted per year by category

Year	Total of Examinations Given	Frequency of Accommodations	Percentage taking exam with accommodations	Annual cost	Mean cost
2000	17,413	219	1%	\$21,115.01	\$96.42
2001	14,579	271	2%	\$25,132.50	\$92.73
2002	14,106	296	2%	\$25,757.50	\$87.02
2003	13,979	378	3%	\$29,662.50	\$78.47
2004	15,092	461	3%	\$36,322.50	\$78.79
2005	15,216	547	4%	\$43,577.50	\$79.67
TOTAL	90,385	2,172	2%	\$181,567.51	\$83.59

Year	Exams given	PTs taking exam	PTs receiving accommodations	PTAs taking exam	PTAs receiving accommodations
2000	17,413	11,915 (68%)	126 (1%)	5,498 (32%)	93 (2%)
2001	14,579	10,283 (71%)	168 (2%)	4,296 (29%)	103 (2%)
2002	14,106	10,688 (76%)	181 (2%)	3,418 (24%)	115 (3%)
2003	13,979	10,938 (78%)	273 (2%)	3,041 (22%)	105 (3%)
2004	15,092	11,283 (75%)	322 (3%)	3,809 (25%)	139 (4%)
2005	15,216	10,988 (72%)	382 (3%)	4,228 (28%)	165 (4%)
TOTAL (AVE)	90,385	66,095 (73%)	1,452 (2%)	24,290 (27%)	720 (3%)

Year	Frequency of Accommodations	Accommodations to PTs	Accommodations to PTAs
2000	219	126 (58%)	93 (42%)
2001	271	168 (62%)	103 (38%)
2002	296	181 (61%)	115 (39%)
2003	378	273 (72%)	105 (28%)
2004	461	322 (70%)	139 (30%)
2005	547	382 (70%)	165 (30%)
TOTAL (AVE)	2,172	1,452 (67%)	720 (33%)

Accommodations Granted from 2000 - 2005



Year	Extended time	Separate room	Paper & Pencil	Reader for Reg Time	Other	Scribe for Reg Time	30 min break
2000	126	58	8	18	6	2	1
2001	156	79	16	11	4	4	1
2002	166	93	24	11	2	0	0
2003	199	101	54	17	5	2	0
2004	250	124	58	21	5	3	0
2005	270	153	80	24	18	2	0
TOTAL (AVE)	1,167 (54%)	608 (28%)	240 (11%)	102 (5%)	40 (2%)	13 (0.6%)	2 (0.09%)

Year	Separate Room	Extended Time	Reader for Reg Time	Scribe for Reg Time	Other	30 min break	Pencil & Paper	TOTALS/ YEAR
2000	\$11,600	\$5,507.50	\$3,600	\$400	\$0.01	\$7.50	\$0.00	\$21,115.01
2001	\$15,800	\$6,325.00	\$2,200	\$800	\$0.00	\$7.50	\$0.00	\$25,132.50
2002	\$18,600	\$4,757.50	\$2,200	\$0.00	\$200.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$25,757.50
2003	\$20,200	\$5,662.50	\$3,400	\$400	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$29,662.50
2004	\$24,800	\$6,722.50	\$4,200	\$600	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$36,322.50
2005	\$30,600	\$7,777.50	\$4,800	\$400	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$43,577.50
TOTALS per ACCOM	\$121,600	\$36,752.50	\$20,400	\$2,600	\$200.01	\$15.00	\$0.00	\$181,567.51

Discussion

- While the number of candidates slightly decreased, the frequency of granted accommodations has progressively increased per year
- Number of accommodations granted as well as the annual cost has doubled
- Mean cost of accommodations has decreased
- Most common accommodation is extended time

Discussion

- Today's consumers are more aware that accommodations can be provided – (ADHD)¹⁰⁻¹²
- Findings of this study indicate that more candidates are granted accommodations.
- Literature⁷⁻⁹ reveals that hidden disabilities are the most common diagnoses that receive testing accommodations

Discussion

- Confirming a diagnosis for hidden disabilities
- Licensing boards are challenged with approving or not approving recommendations provided to them by any professional who sends them.

Discussion

- A concern is there is no common agreement between states as to how a diagnosis is made, determining which diagnoses need accommodations, as well as which accommodation (s) should be provided
- This differs from the ACT and SAT¹³⁻¹⁴
- Process limitations

Limitations

- FSBPT did not release to us the disabilities of those granted accommodations
- Did not grant access to pass rates, number of attempts, if they have taken the exam previously without and then with accommodations

Future Study Needed

- A future study is recommended that combines these results with pass rates, comparing pass rates and disability diagnosis, as well as comparing pass rates for those with and without accommodations.

Conclusions

- People with disabilities have impairments of varying degrees.
- One cannot generalize the accommodations needed based simply on the impairment or disability diagnosis.
- Physicians and psychologists face challenges as they recommend appropriate testing accommodations for individuals (esp. those with hidden disabilities).
- Licensing boards face challenges as they determine appropriateness of the recommended accommodations.
- November 2006 MCAT¹⁵

Importance to Profession

- Important to the candidates applying to take the licensure exam.
- Important to the PT academic programs who provide classroom and clinic accommodations.
- The results of this study show a need for the development of national policies for the services of candidates with disabilities for the NPTE

QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS??

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