

Appendix A: Description of minimal proficiency in language skills necessary for physical therapists and physical therapist assistants

Skill	<p style="text-align: center;">Description of Minimal Proficiency</p> <p style="text-align: center;">** Minimally proficient communicators demonstrate all language skills without compromising patient safety. **</p>
Writing	<p>Always:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writes with only minor flaws in spelling, grammar, and use of abbreviations; flaws do not interfere with the reader’s understanding • Provides adequate support when explaining an opinion or conclusion • Is aware of the audience, e.g., aware of differences between writing to a physician and writing to a patient <p>Most of the time:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizes writing logically • Provides information that is accurate, clear, and concise
Speaking	<p>Always:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speaks fluidly; lapses or pauses do not interfere with the listener’s understanding • Uses basic vocabulary and grammar adequately and correctly; minor errors do not impact patient care • Is able to paraphrase (express a message using different words to achieve greater clarity) • Requires only a reasonable amount of effort by the listener to understand his/her message; does not confuse or frustrate the listener • Responds to questions with relevant information • Advocates for the patient’s best interests in discussions with other health care professionals using appropriate language and tone <p>Most of the time:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-corrects errors in speaking • Conveys messages clearly and concisely <p>Some of the time:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adapts speech to the audience (e.g., gender, culture, role of the listener [patient, physician, etc.]

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Listening	<p>Always:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognizes information that has urgent/emergency implications <p>Most of the time:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understands the speaker’s explicitly stated meaning and implicit meaning, including basic vocabulary, regardless of the speaker’s accent/dialect • Uses context clues and intonation clues to understand the speaker’s intended meaning or to understand unfamiliar words • Synthesizes and organizes key information in order to determine next steps/actions • Understands lengthy speech or discourse and picks out key information • Extracts and recalls relevant/essential information during conversations in all media (by telephone, face-to-face, etc.)
Reading	<p>Always:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjusts reading strategy (e.g., pace) for different types of documents • Makes connections between different parts of documents • Understands basic vocabulary and simple grammatical structures • Identifies errors or inconsistencies in documents and infers the intended meaning <p>Most of the time:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehends the key points of documents (e.g., patient charts) • Understands the tone and perspective of documents’ authors • Infers implicit meaning of documents from stated information • Distinguishes important/relevant details from less important/relevant details <p>Some of the time:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understands less frequently used words and complex grammatical structures