



Maj. Schneeberger and Sgt. 1st Class Cassandra Criscione at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston, Texas, May 5, 2024.

Physical Therapists in the Force

As the Army embraces a holistic medical solution for conserving fighting strength, the physical therapy technician, 68F, is filling a critical need in care of the nation's fighting force.

The Joint Physical Therapy Technician (PTT) Course at the Medical Education and Training Campus (METC) trains Soldiers, Airmen, Sailors, and Coast Guardsmen. The consolidated curriculum for all Services consists of 16 weeks and one day with an additional seven training days for Navy and an additional 10 days for Army.

The complete revision of the consolidated curriculum, completed in January 2023, aligns with the majority of the civilian physical therapy assistant programs in the nation. The Joint training provides students with superior education of basic science and evidence-based medicine to ensure graduates are

able to provide safe, high quality patient care.

The additional 10 days of training for the 68Fs (Physical Therapy Specialists) incorporate active-duty sick call, injury prevention, human performance optimization, health promotion, and an overview of the Army's Holistic Health and Fitness (H2F) system.

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"As the H2F system is fielded at an accelerated rate across the Army and the potential for large scale combat operations/multidomain operations, the 68F force will undoubtedly play a pivotal role in improving readiness and performance while preventing injury for Soldiers," says Colonel Mae Miranda, Course Director, Joint Physical Therapy Technician Course at METC.

The course is challenging; however, Major Monique Schneeberger, an instructor for the course, says that graduating is a strong beginning of a fulfilling career as a 68F.

"If you are passionate in the ability for movement to heal, then this is the field you want to be in," says Schneeberger, "especially if you want to help guide others in the process to rehab, stay fit, stay healthy, and live a relatively pain-free life."

The course teaches how the body interacts as a unit and includes study of major muscle groups, bone structure, and connecting tissues working in motion. The classes begin in a learning phase focusing on an introduction to the field.

"We start with professional ethics, patient's rights, and then into the other introductory phases like the introduction to the muscular systems," says Maj. Schneeberger.

The course goes over the entire body system covering the head, shoulders, knees, and toes... and everything in between.

“That’s one of the challenges of our course; it’s all encompassing,” says Maj. Schneeberger.

The Physical Therapy Specialists work alongside Physical Therapists to aid patients with injuries and overall physical conditioning. The course is available to enlisted personnel in the Active Duty Army, the Army Reserve, and the Army National Guard.



U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Nicholas Santos, 375th Medical Group physical therapy technician, Keesler Air Force Base, Mississippi, demonstrates an exercise to a patient at the 9th Medical Group physical therapy clinic at Beale Air Force Base, California, July 12, 2024. Santos worked at the 9th Medical Group’s physical therapy clinic for two months through the Air Force Manning Assist Program. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Frederick A. Brown)