Physiotherapy in Veterans’ Care
Action is needed to improve access

The current Department of Veterans’ Affairs (DVA) fee schedule remunerates physiotherapists substantially below their standard prices. Our member survey highlights the significant impact this has on access to veterans’ care.

DVA FEES CHALLENGE THE SUSTAINABILITY OF PHYSIOTHERAPY SERVICES FOR VETERANS

DVA services are not viable

98% of physiotherapists surveyed reported that the DVA fee is less than the cost of their standard in-rooms physiotherapy service – 52% of these take at least a $40 pay-cut per DVA service provided.

91.5% state that the DVA fee per physiotherapy service does not allow them to sustainably continue providing care for veterans.

An additional 45% of physiotherapists will likely stop or limit DVA services if the fee doesn’t increase

• Physiotherapists are passionate about veterans’ health and believe that veterans have the right to choose their physiotherapist, however, without a significant fee increase, the pool of providers to choose from will continue to reduce.

• Physiotherapists are currently providing unviable DVA services out of sincere care for veterans.

• Fee increases will enable veterans to access the best providers and the best care.

Leaving physiotherapy behind leaves veterans behind

Occupational therapy and podiatry have a notably higher fee-for-service than physiotherapy:

$118.55 Occupation therapy (OT)
$85.65 Podiatry
$67.95 Physiotherapy

Physiotherapists are strongly concerned by DVA fee disparities

98% of physiotherapists report that they are strongly concerned by the fee disparity between OT, podiatry and physiotherapy.

79% indicated that the current physiotherapy fee negatively impacts veterans’ access to physiotherapy services.

Recommendations to sustain and support veterans’ care

The APA recommends that DVA adopt an urgent fee increase for:

• initial physiotherapy in-rooms consultations to at least $118.55 (parity with occupational therapy); and

• subsequent in-rooms consultations to at least $85.65 (parity with podiatry).

Source: Assessment of physiotherapist experiences and impact on practice viability in veterans’ care. APA Member Survey. April 2023