

The Road to Becoming a Certified Hand Therapist

Combined Sections Meeting
Chicago, IL - February 8-11th, 2012

Wen Yau Jennie Yen, PT, DPT, CLT

Objectives

- Discuss the educational requirements as well as options to obtain this education.
- List Hand Therapy Certification Committee (HTCC) exam qualifications, specifics, and domains/areas covered on the exam.
- Explain how to document clinical experience and ways to accomplish it.
- Describe the necessary skills/competencies and how to develop them.
- Identify various resources to help prepare for the HTCC exam.

What is Hand Therapy?

- The art and science of rehabilitation of the hands and upper extremity.
 - Performed by an occupational or physical therapist with a high degree of specialization that requires continuing education and, often, advanced certification.
 - “Specialized skills in assessment and treatment...
 - Prevent injury or impairment
 - Restore functional activity
 - Enhance participation in daily life.”

Who is a Certified Hand Therapist (CHT)?

- A CHT has a minimum of five years of clinical experience
 - 4,000 hours or more in direct practice in hand therapy.
- Successfully pass a comprehensive test of advanced clinical skills and theory in upper quarter rehabilitation.

How Many CHTs Are There?

- 5,572 Certified Hand Therapists worldwide:
 - United States 5,294
 - Canada 172
 - Australia & New Zealand 75
 - US territories & military bases, and other countries 31
- Broken down by profession:
 - Occupational therapists 86%
 - **Physical therapists 14%**
 - CHTs who are both OT & PT <1%

Hand Therapy Certification Committee (HTCC)

- Certification
 - Provides assurance to the public that a CHT meets the standards set by HTCC.
- Recertification
 - Required to demonstrate continued professional development and competency every 5 years.

What is Required to Apply for Certification?

- All occupational or physical therapists
- Current professional credential to practice (copy of your original license, certificate, or registration)
- Documentation of five years of practice as an OT or PT
- Documentation of 4,000 hours of Direct Practice Experience in hand therapy
 - Verified by your supervisor or employer
- Completion of an Explanation of Hours form
 - Describes how you determined the number of hours of Direct Practice in hand therapy you are submitting
- Completed and signed consent form.

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The American Society of Hand Therapists (ASHT)

- A professional organization consisting of licensed OTs and PTs who specialize in the treatment and rehabilitation of the upper extremity.
- Mission Statement
 - To be recognized as a leader in advancing the science and practice of hand therapy through education, advocacy, research and clinical standards.

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History of ASHT

- The concept of a united hand therapy organization was created in 1975 at the ASSH meeting in San Francisco.
- The "original six" included:
 - Bonnie Olivett
 - Karen Pendergast Lauckhardt
 - Evelyn Mackin-Henry
 - Judy Bell-Krotoski
 - Mary Kasch
 - Pegge Carter-Wilson.
- The first Annual Meeting was held in Dallas in 1978
 - Bonnie Olivett was elected the first president and she presented the first presidential address.

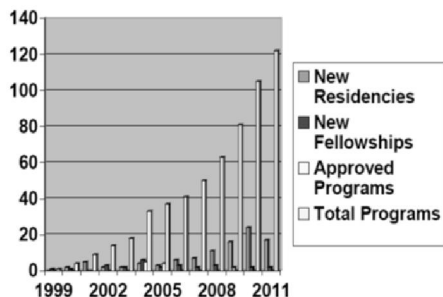
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Vision 2020

- Vision Statement for Physical Therapy
 - "Physical therapy, by 2020, will be provided by physical therapists who are doctors of physical therapy and who may be board-certified specialists. Consumers will have direct access to physical therapists in all environments for patient/client management, prevention, and wellness services. Physical therapists will be practitioners of choice in patients'/clients' health networks and will hold all privileges of autonomous practice..."
- Career development opportunities
 - **Residency & Fellowship**
 - American Board of Physical Therapy Specialties (ABPTS) Certification in 8 areas
 - Post-professional degree
 - Leadership development.

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APTA Residency and Fellowship Program Credentialing 1999 to Present



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Residency vs. Fellowship

- **Residency**
 - To advance expertise in examination, evaluation, diagnosis, prognosis, intervention and management of patients in a defined area of clinical practice (specialty).
 - To prepare an individual to become a board-certified clinical specialist.

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Residency vs. Fellowship

- **Fellowship**
 - To provide greater depth in a specialty or subspecialty area than that which is covered in a residency program.
 - Applicants must be licensed as a
 - PT and possess one or more of the following qualifications:
 - 1) Specialist certification,
 - 2) Completion of a residency, or
 - 3) **Clinical skills within a specialty area.**
- **Attendance at a residency program is NOT required for admission into a fellowship.**

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Why Should I Pursue a Post-Professional Residency or Fellowship?

- **Mentoring**
 - Advance your examination and treatment skills
 - Improve and strengthen
 - Clinical reasoning skills
 - Theoretical knowledge
 - Evidence-based background
 - Increase confidence in communicating with patients and other providers.

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Why Should I Pursue a Post-Professional Residency or Fellowship?

- Patients and PT facilities also benefit from your skills
 - Patients express confidence in the thoroughness and efficiency of the care they receive
 - Employers report higher staff recruitment and retention.
- The more PTs who study in residencies and fellowships, the stronger the profession becomes overall.

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Why Should I Pursue a Post-Professional Residency or Fellowship?

- Residency and fellowship programs
 - Define practice areas
 - Undertake research contributing to evidence-based practice
 - Improve quality of care for all patients receiving treatment.

(Carol Jo Tichenor, PT, MA, HFAAOMPT. Kaiser Hayward PT Fellowship – Exploring Residencies and Fellowships)

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My journey...

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Hospital for Special Surgery Hand Therapy Fellowship

- **Program description**
 - Full-time 9-month clinically based training program
 - 50% educational experience
 - 50% case load.
- **Mission**
 - To provide therapists with a comprehensive, structured program of clinical and didactic experiences for the development of advanced critical reasoning and clinical skills in hand and upper extremity rehabilitation.

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**Hospital for Special Surgery
Hand Therapy Fellowship**

• Educational Component

- Comprehensive series of weekly lectures
- Weekly custom splinting labs
- Hand Service conferences with surgeons
- Hand Therapy Center staff inservices
- Monthly Rehabilitation Department inservices.


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**Hospital for Special Surgery
Hand Therapy Fellowship**

• Patient Care and Treatment


- Hand therapy fellows work closely with Hand Service surgeons
- Hand and upper extremity surgery observation
- Co-treat with an advanced clinician
- Weekly caseload review
- One-to-one mentoring with expert hand therapists.

• <http://www.hss.edu/hand-therapy-fellowship.asp>

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References

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- <http://www.apta.org/vision2020/>
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- <http://www.assh.org/Public/About/Pages/WhatisHandTherapy.aspx>
- <http://www.htcc.org/about/index.cfm>
- <http://www.asht.org/education/consumer.cfm#WhatisHandTherapy>
- http://www.kaiserhaywardptfellowship.com/PDF/PT%20Fellowship_Exploring%20Residencies%20and%20Fellowships_white%20paper.pdf
- http://www.htcc.org/certification/downloads/DP_Experience.pdf
- http://www.htcc.org/certification/downloads/Employ_Verify.pdf

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REHABILITATION



**Questions?
Wen Yau Jennie Yen, PT, DPT, CLT
Hand Therapy Center
Tel 212.606.1660
yenw@hss.edu**

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Other options...

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The Road to Becoming a CHT

Elizabeth Byrne PT, MPT, OCS, CHT, ATC



Objectives

- List the reasons and potential benefits of becoming a CHT.
- Discuss the competencies and domains of practice covered in the CHT exam
- Explain the importance of mentoring in becoming a CHT and how to maximize your mentoring time.
- Discuss various educational programs, learning opportunities and resources available to help prepare for the exam

Why become a CHT...

- Offers assurance to the public that the therapist has achieved the highest level of competency in the profession and stays up to date with practice within the field. (HTCC, 2011).
- Promotion/job retention/ increased referrals.
- Additional compensation/potential increase in salary.
- Interesting and new clientele.
- Work with patients with complex problems as an upper quarter specialist



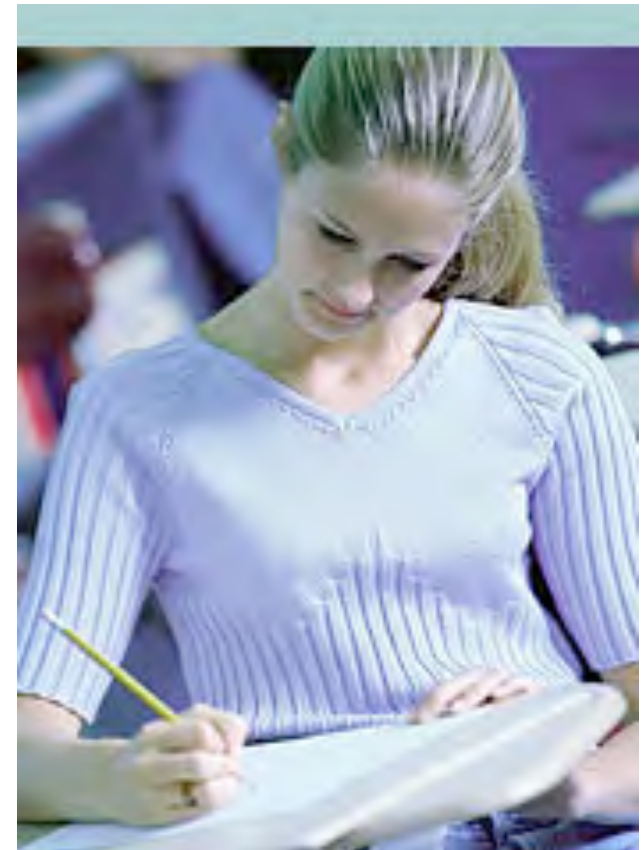
The Test

- 4 hour, 200 question, computer based exam offered during two one week windows per year
- Areas of competency included in exam: scientific knowledge, clinical judgment/reasoning, technical skills, interpersonal and communication skills, professionalism, resource management



Practice Domains on CHT exam

- Evaluation of UE & Relevant Patient Characteristics 26% (52)
- Determine Prognosis and Plan of Care 18% (36)
- Implement Therapeutic Interventions 30% (60)
- Promote Professional Practice 6% (12)
- Fundamental Knowledge & Basic Science 20% (40)



Evaluation UE & Relevant Patient Characteristics



- History including co-morbidities
- Assessment tools
- Surgical and non surgical conditions
- Differential diagnosis
- Posture and ergonomics
- Tissue and wound healing
- Pharmacology, imaging, electro-diagnostics, lab values
- Identify impairments, functional limitations and disabilities

Determine Prognosis and Plan of Care



- Determine an individual's plan of care
- Develop goals, time frame, etc.
- Select appropriateness of interventions- indications, contraindications, parameters, treatment guidelines
- Utilize defensible documentation
- Consult with other providers when appropriate
- Assess readiness to reintegrate into participation
- Determine need for orthotics and prosthetics

Implement Therapeutic Interventions

- Therapeutic exercise
- Manual therapy
- Modalities
- Functional activities
- Activity modification
- Adaptive / assistive devices
- Desensitization / Sensory re-education
- Joint protection
- Wound care
- Scar management
- Fabricating orthotics
- Work conditioning / work hardening



Promote Professional Practice

- Implement evidence-based practice
- Interpret research and outcome studies
- Assess patient satisfaction
- Maintain ethical standards
- Adhere to safety standards, practice regulations, and policies and procedures
- Utilize support staff appropriately



Fundamental Knowledge and Basic Science

- Surface anatomy
- Connective tissue anatomy
- Skeletal system
- Muscular system
- Nervous system
- Vascular / lymphatic system
- Kinesiology and biomechanics
- Pathomechanics
- Development of age specific hand function
- Physical properties of heat, water, electricity, light, sound



Kaiser Permanente Hand Therapy Program Mission Statement

- To provide clinical training of physical and occupational therapists that accelerates their professional development in becoming a:
 - highly skilled patient care provider;
 - resource, educator and mentor for staff and the professional community where they serve;
 - competent consumer and contributor to scientific literature



Kaiser Permanente Hand Therapy Program

- Starts in January and runs for 50 consecutive weeks
- Includes 10 monthly California APTA approved weekend courses- lecture and labs (including cadaver, surgical and splinting)
- Fellow is employed 20 hours/ week treating 100% upper extremity patients
- Weekly 1:1 mentoring with opportunities for co- tx w/ expert CHTs and case supervision
- Includes 120 hours of self directed learning experiences- hand surgery observation, MD clinic observation, instructional conferences with hand surgeons and hand surgeon fellows, journal club, study group, etc.
- For further details contact Rebecca Park, Dept secretary (714) 748-6103 Rebecca.L.Park@kp.org or Eleanor Monroe at Eleanor.M.Monroe@kp.org

Other post professional programs



The
Philadelphia Hand Center
P.C.



Thomas
Jefferson
University

- Evelyn J. Mackin Hand Therapy Fellowship (The Philadelphia Hand Center)
 - Purpose: Clinical training in hand management and patient care, including pre- and postoperative assessment, treatment planning, splinting, return-to-work programs and outcomes.
 - Training Expectations: The fellow will be expected to: 1) attend six surgical procedures, post operative follow-ups and rehabilitation sessions, 2) attend and participate at a weekly hand therapy educational meeting, 3) develop a clinical research project/proposal to be completed by the end of the six month period and/or 4) complete a case report for submission to the The Journal of Hand Therapy.
 - Time Period: Full-time, six-month fellowship from January 2, 2012 through June 30, 2012 or July 1, 2012 through December 31, 2012.
 - For more details see www.handfoundation.org/

Other programs continued

- The University of Michigan Hand Therapy Fellowship program.
 - Purpose: This fellowship program is designed to provide occupational and physical therapists with the advanced knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in the field of hand therapy.
 - Training Expectations: comprehensive evaluations, clinical reasoning, UE anatomy, formal competencies, splinting, treatment planning and implementation. Candidate may work at variety of different sites to see a variety of patient populations with upper quadrant injuries.
 - Time period: full time, six-month fellowship.
 - For more details: www.med.umich.edu/pmr/divisions/pt/fellowship.htm



More post professional programs

- Drexel University Certificate in Advanced Practice in Hand & Upper Quarter. Post-Professional Doctorate in Physical Therapy (PPDPT)
- Certificate program designed for therapists who wish to participate in advanced study of the hand and upper quarter. Consists of four graduate level courses (Foundations in Hand Therapy, Upper Quarter Joint Pathology, Nerve Injuries of Upper Quarter, Diseases that Affect the Hand), offered in an online format w/ onsite weekend lab sessions
- Successful completion of these courses, earns a post- professional certificate of completion. Credits may be applied to either a PPDPT or a PhD Program in Rehabilitation Sciences
- Students with Masters level education must successfully complete 8 courses and an optional 2 more course in specialization to earn a PPDPT. Time Period: up to 2 years to complete required course work
- For more details: www.drexel.edu/catalog/g-about/post-prof-dpt.htm



Other programs continued



- Texas Women's University
 - Purpose: to provide OT and PT with the in-depth knowledge and skills to facilitate their decision to specialize in the therapeutic management of disorders and problems affecting the upper extremity through four on-line courses, with optional on-site laboratory and clinical experiences.
 - Training: students who successfully complete the following 4 courses: Upper Extremity Anatomy and Function; Problems and Injuries of Upper Extremity; Evaluation of Upper Extremity, and Clinical Reasoning and Therapeutic Management in Upper Extremity Rehabilitation will receive Graduate Certificate of Advanced Studies in Upper Extremity Rehabilitation
 - Time period: New admission occurs every Spring semester (mid January). Due to the intensive curriculum of the program, working therapists are advised to take one course per semester.
 - For more details: www.twu.edu/occupational-therapy/ue-cert.asp

Other resources



- Attend weekend courses for shoulder, elbow, wrist and hand (i.e Doctors Demystify series)



- Participate in local study groups (i.e. Southern California Hand Therapy Study Group)



- Participate in journal clubs. ASSH.org has list of journal clubs



- Attend review courses (i.e. ASHT Comprehensive Hand Therapy Review Course)



- Online sites:-www.handtherapyresources.com. Hand Therapy Resource Center Has smart phone application. \$99/6 months. www.handtherapy.com. Exploring Hand Therapy offers various learning resources.

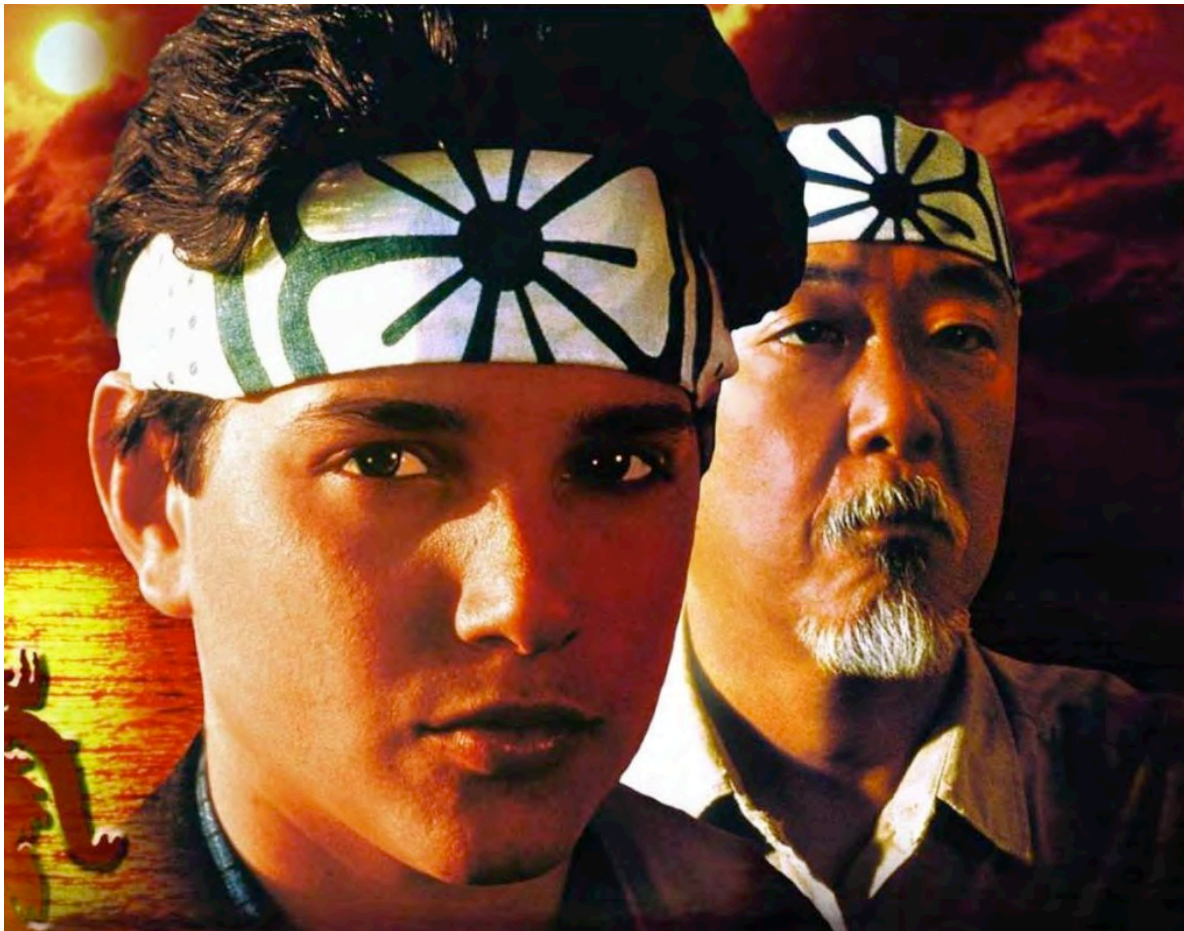


Mentoring

- A mentor is “a trusted friend, counselor or teacher, usually a more experienced person. (1) A mentor is a supporter, draws on strengths, collaborator, role model (2)
- Mentors provide expertise to less experienced individuals to help them advance their careers, enhance their education and build their networks. (1)



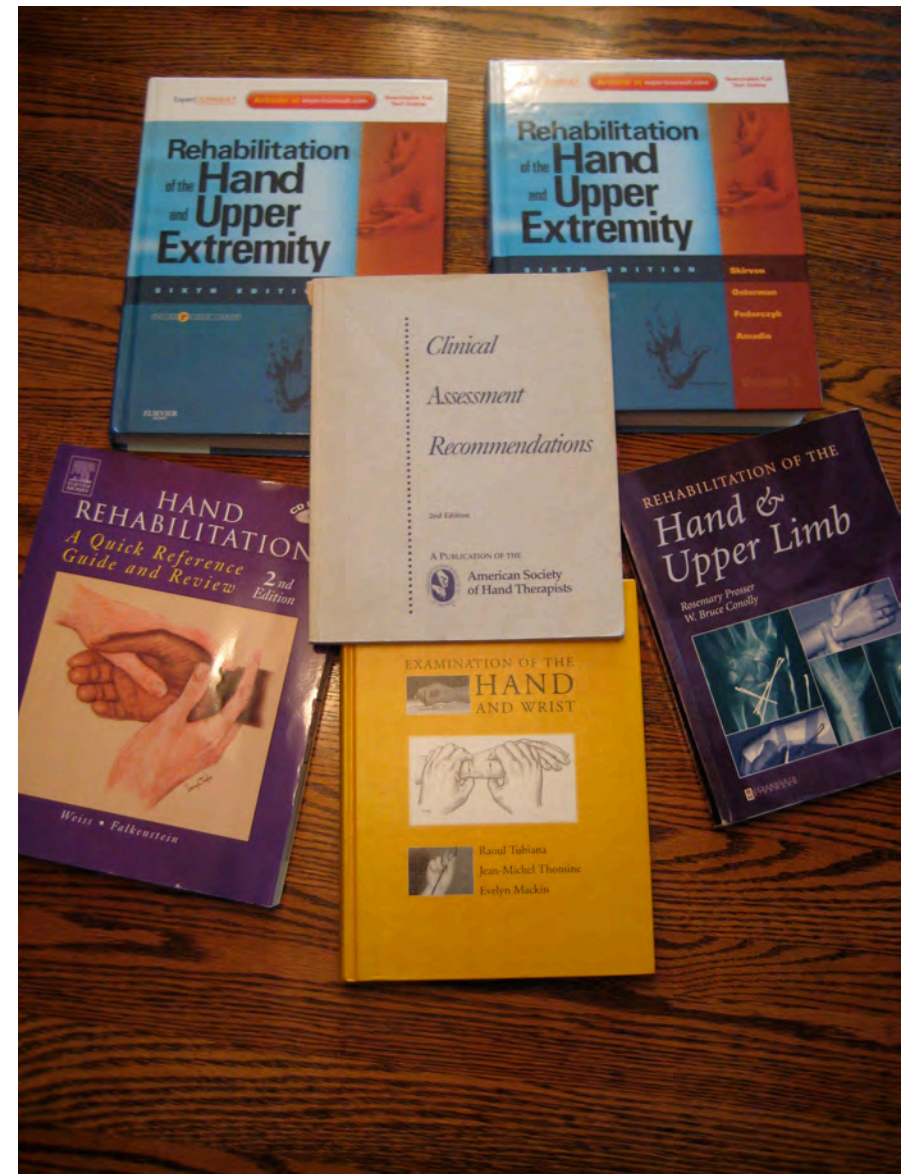
What to look for in a Mentor/Protege Relationship



- availability
- open communication/
connectedness
- reciprocal learning / sense of collegiality

Books and other helpful resources

- Rehabilitation of the Hand and Upper Extremity by Skirven, et. al.
- Hand Rehabilitation: A Quick Reference Guide and Review (the purple book) by Weiss, et. al.
- Examination of the Hand and Wrist by Tubiana, et. al.
- Rehabilitation of the Hand and Upper Limb by Prosser et al.
- Clinical Assessment Recommendations by ASHT (currently being revised)

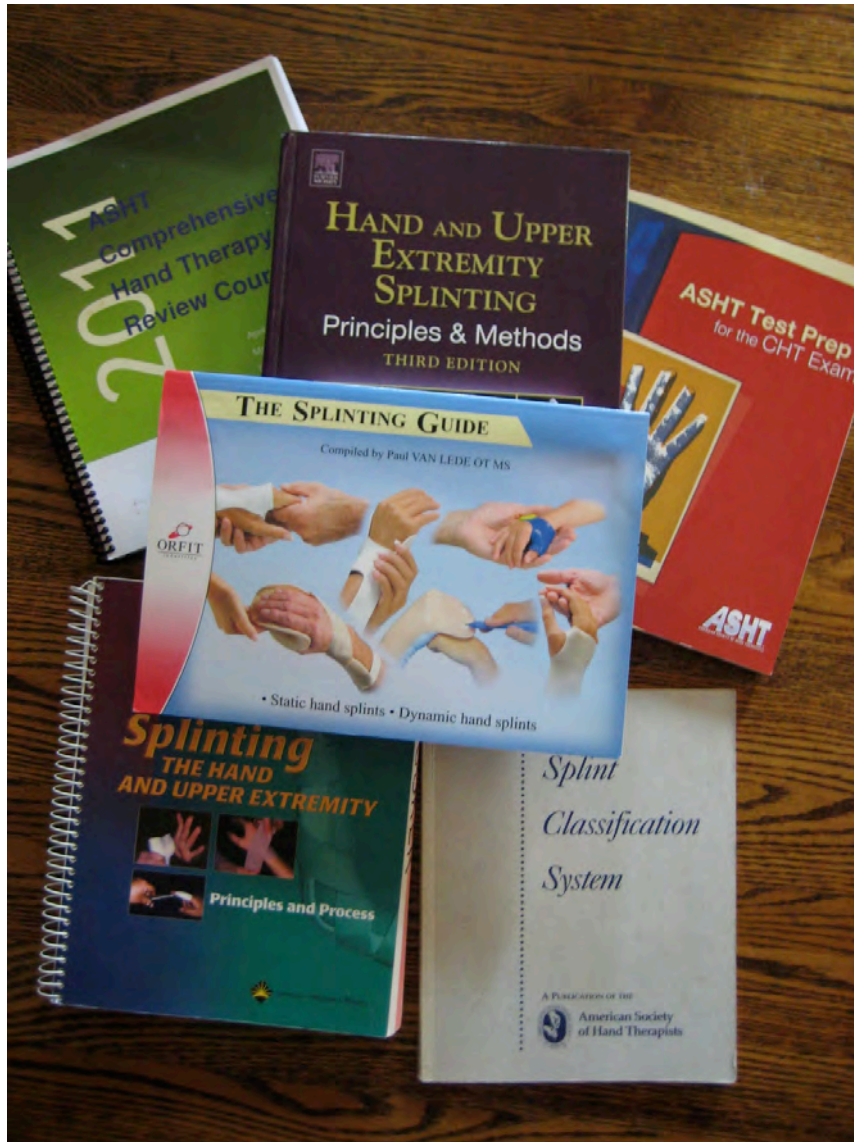


Anatomy Books and Resources

- Atlas of Hand Anatomy and Clinical Implications by Yu, et.al. (being revised)
- Hand and Upper Extremity Anatomy to Color and Study by Poritsky
- Clinical Musculoskeletal Anatomy by Pratt
- Clinical Mechanics of the Hand by Brand, et. al.
- Evaluation of Sensibility and Re-education of Sensation in the Hand by Dellon
- Orthopedic clinical examination with Netters illustration



Splinting Books and Other Resources



- ASHT Comprehensive Hand Therapy Review Course Manual and ASHT Test Prep for HCT exam book
- Splinting the Hand and Upper Extremity by Jacobs, et.al.
- Hand and Upper Extremity Splinting Principles & Methods by Fess et. al.
- The Splinting Guide by Van Lede (Orofit)
- Splinting Classification System by ASHT

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- <http://www.htcc.org> Accessed 12/13/11
- HTCC 2011 Salary & Benefit Survey from www.htcc.org. March 2011



Questions?

Elizabeth Byrne PT, MPT, OCS, CHT, ATC
Elizabeth.M.Byrne@kp.org (714) 830-6615