



**TO:** Alliance for Physical Therapy Quality and Innovation  
**FR:** Morning Consult  
**DT:** October 4, 2022  
**RE:** Voter Opinions on Physical and Occupational Therapy



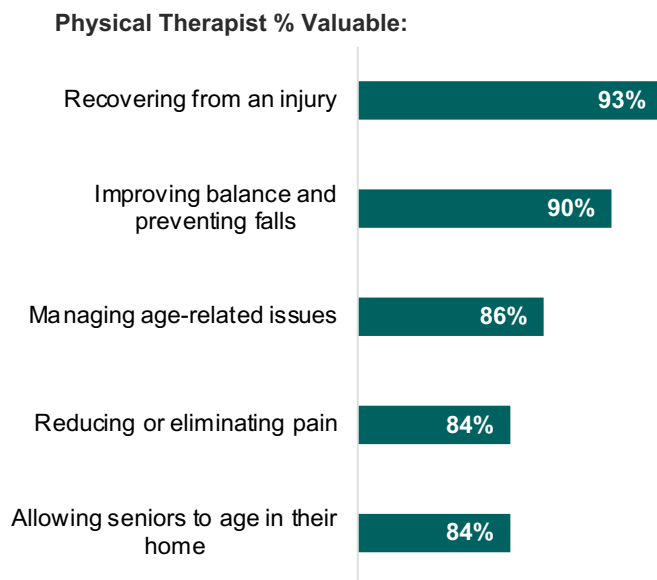
A recent survey among senior voters ages 65+ shows high levels of concern about pay cuts for physical and occupational therapists proposed in the 2023 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule. Eighty percent of senior voters surveyed indicate they are more likely to vote for candidates in future elections who support protecting physical and occupational therapists from Medicare pay cuts.

**SENIOR VOTER OPINIONS ON PHYSICAL AND OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY**

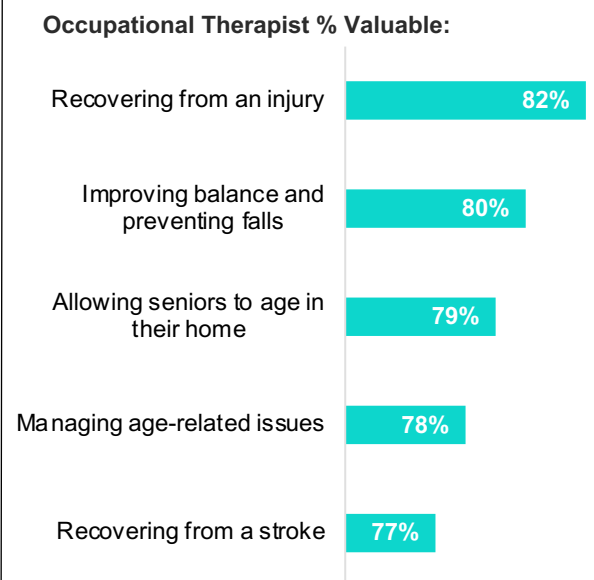
Senior voters see *strong value* in physical and occupational therapy.

- Respondents think positively of physical and occupational therapy – nine in ten senior voters (88%) have favorable views of physical therapists and eight in ten senior voters (77%) have favorable views of occupational therapists.
- Senior voters believe physical and occupational therapists are highly impactful in managing age-related issues. Respondents see value in physical and occupational therapists for recovering from injuries and preventing falls.

*How valuable, if at all, are physical therapists to each of the following?*



*How valuable, if at all, are occupational therapists to each of the following?*



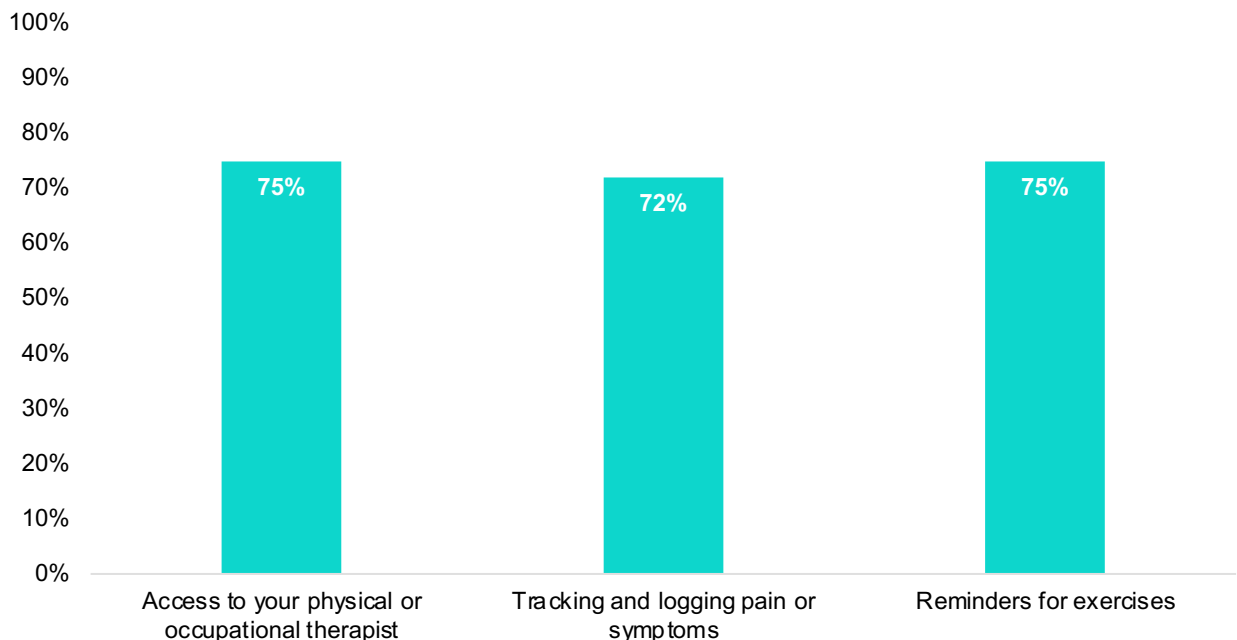
## INCREASED ACCESS TO PHYSICAL AND OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

**Senior voters are interested in having the option to access their physical or occupational therapist through advanced technology.**

- Senior voters want to be able to contact their physical or occupational therapist when they cannot come into the office for an in-person appointment. Three in five respondents (76%) say it is important for them to be able to access their physical therapist when they cannot come into the office for an in-person appointment and seven in ten (70%) say it is important for them to be able to access their occupational therapist when they cannot come into the office for an in-person appointment.
- Interest in senior voters having the option to contact their physical or occupational therapist when they are not able to come into the office for an in-person appointment is high. Two-thirds of respondents (67%) are interested in having the option to access their physical therapist when they cannot come into the office for an in-person appointment and three in five (62%) say the same for their occupational therapist.
- Senior voters believe advanced technology would make access to their physical occupational therapist (75%), tracking and logging pain or symptoms (72%), and reminders for exercises (75%) easier.

*As a reminder, physical therapists and occupational therapists may now use advanced technology (i.e. an app) that allows them to remind patients on how and when to do their exercises and respond to their questions when they are not able to come to the office for an in-person appointment. Would having access to this kind of advanced technology when you are not able to come into the office for an in-person appointment make the following easier or more difficult?*

**\*Data shows % More Easy**



## SENIOR VOTER VIEWS ON MEDICARE PAY CUTS

**Concern is high among senior voters when thinking about the consequences of the proposed pay cuts in the 2023 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule.**

- Nearly nine in ten senior voters are concerned about physical and occupational therapy closures (88%) and limiting options beyond nursing homes (88%).

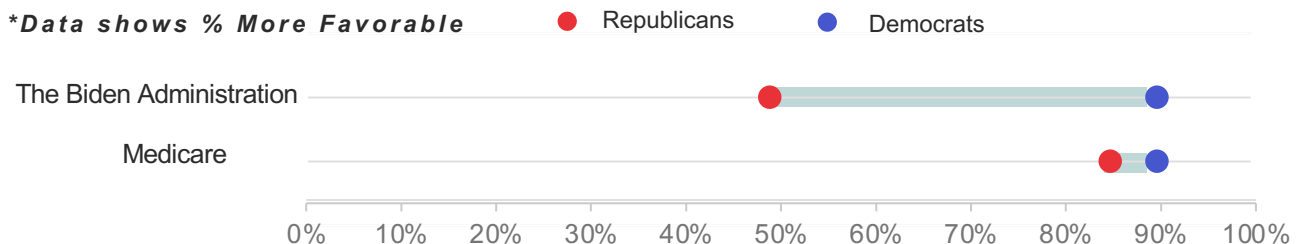
*Below are a few statements made about physical therapy and occupational therapy. How concerning, if at all, are each of the following statements?*

% Concerning	Full Message
88%	<b>[RURAL CLOSURES]</b> Physical and occupational therapists have providers across the country, including in many rural communities. Physical and occupational therapy providers in rural communities will be the first to close with budget cuts and many patients will lose access to the services they need.
88%	<b>[AGING IN PLACE]</b> Physical and occupational therapy can improve seniors' ability to complete activities of daily living and prevent falls, making them more independent in their homes. Reduced funding for physical and occupational therapists would result in more seniors having to live in assisted care or nursing home facilities.
87%	<b>[OPIOIDS]</b> Physical and occupational therapists can provide safe alternatives to opioids for managing pain and patients who undergo physical therapy are less dependent on pain medication. Without physical therapists, patients would have to remain dependent on opioids for pain management.

## SENIOR VOTES IN FUTURE ELECTIONS

**Senior voters say a candidate's position on protecting physical and occupational therapists from Medicare pay cuts will impact their voting decisions in future elections – and their favorability of the Biden Administration and Medicare program.**

- Four in five respondents (80%) are more likely to vote for candidates who support protecting physical and occupational therapists from Medicare pay cuts.
- Stabilizing funding for physical and occupational therapists would increase senior voter favorability of the Biden Administration (67%) and Medicare (86%).



*Methodology: This poll was conducted between September 21-September 27, 2022 among a sample of 1005 Registered Senior Voters. The interviews were conducted online and the data were weighted to approximate a target sample of Registered Senior Voters based on gender by age, educational attainment, race, marital status, home ownership, race by educational attainment, 2020 presidential vote, and region. The interviews were conducted online. Results from the full survey have a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percentage points.*