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## **PRESENT STATUS AND FUTURE REHABILITATION TRENDS IN THE UNITED STATES**

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There are currently 4,642 Board certified physiatrists and 1,277 physical medicine and rehabilitation ( PM&R ) residents in training in the United States. The physical medicine portion of the specialty, especially sports medicine, occupational medicine and treatment of musculoskeletal disease, appears to be growing the most rapidly. The specialty is looking at the issue of physiatrists being primary care physicians to the severely disabled, especially head and spinal cord injured patients. The field is applying for its first subspecialty, Spinal Cord Injury Medicine. More residents are enrolling in fellowship training and there is a move to have fellowships accredited. The specialty has commissioned a manpower study to look at future workforce needs. The trend of health care in the United States is de-emphasizing inpatient care and expanding lower cost alternatives such as subacute rehabilitation, day hospitals, transitional living and ambulatory care. Research both for training researchers and for specific projects has increased especially with the advent of the National Center for Medical Rehabilitation Research within the National Institutes of Health. Outcome research and health services research are being stressed.