I. Overview

The Hand Therapy Certification Commission (HTCC) posted a salary survey on the HTCC website in April 2015. This is the sixth salary and benefits survey that HTCC has performed since 2004. The purpose of the survey was to obtain information frequently requested by therapists and employers, to serve as a resource to the hand therapy community by sharing information and to provide ongoing data.

2,360 surveys were completed, 94% of the respondents were Certified Hand Therapists (CHTs) and 6% were not. 96% of the respondents were from the United States (US), with 3% from Canada and 1% from countries outside the US and Canada; there was one non-CHT response from Canada and no non-CHT responses from Australia or New Zealand.

II. Salary Information

Average salaries per hour for CHTs and Non-CHTs in the United States, CHTs in Canada, and all Practice Owners, divided into high, medium and low ranges, are provided below. The percent of change in each salary level compared to the 2013 survey is provided. There were not enough responses from Australia and New Zealand to report salary information.

The data for high, medium and low averages was calculated using quartiles. The data set was divided into three quartiles: the lower quartile, the median quartile and the upper quartile. The median quartile divided the total data into two equal parts. The lower quartile is the median of the lower half of the data and the upper quartile is the median of the upper half of the data.
15% of the respondents reported that they were the owners of their practice. Because their responses tended to skew the overall results, their salaries are reported separately as follows:

### Practice Owners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Salary Range</th>
<th>Change from 2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Up 2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>No Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>No Change</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### CHT Regional Data

Salary information for CHTs by regions of the US is presented below with an indication of changes in average salary per hour since the 2013 survey for each category. The states included in each region are shown in the map. The average salary increased in all regions, with the largest increase in the New England region for therapists in the high range. The highest average salaries were in the Western region and the lowest average salaries were in the Midwest.
Western Region

Southwest Region

Midwest Region
Southern Region

Mid-Atlantic Region

New England Region
Salary information was also analyzed by years of experience, how therapists were paid, how many hours they worked and whether or not they received benefits. Data is broken down into these categories for CHTs in the United States since there were not enough responses from non-CHTs or from therapists outside of the United States. This year’s survey analyzed ranges in years of experience as an OT or PT from 5 years or less to greater than 45 years of experience. Comparisons to the 2013 survey are indicated in parentheses if available.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years of Experience as an OT or PT</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 years or less</td>
<td>$40</td>
<td>$40</td>
<td>$31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10 Years</td>
<td>$45 (+10%)</td>
<td>$39 (+5%)</td>
<td>$35 (+6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15 Years</td>
<td>$46 (+5%)</td>
<td>$41 (3%)</td>
<td>$37 (+3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20 Years</td>
<td>$46 (+5%)</td>
<td>$42 (+5%)</td>
<td>$38 (+6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-25 Years</td>
<td>$47 (+2%)</td>
<td>$42 (NC)</td>
<td>$39 (+3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-30 Years</td>
<td>$48 (+2%)</td>
<td>$44 (+5%)</td>
<td>$40 (+5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-35 Years</td>
<td>$50 (+6%)</td>
<td>$44 (+5%)</td>
<td>$40 (+5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-40 Years</td>
<td>$50</td>
<td>$44</td>
<td>$40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-45 Years</td>
<td>$50</td>
<td>$45</td>
<td>$40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;45 Years</td>
<td>$48</td>
<td>$40</td>
<td>$40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Salaried                          | $47 (+4%)  | $42 (+5%)  | $38 (+5%)  |
| Paid Hourly                       | $48 (+6%)  | $43 (+5%)  | $39 (5%)   |

| >40 Hours                         | $49 (+4%)  | $43 (+2%)  | $39 (+5%)  |
| 32-40 Hours                       | $46 (+2%)  | $41 (+3%)  | $38 (+6%)  |
| 21-31 Hours                       | $47 (+4%)  | $43 (+5%)  | $39 (+6%)  |
| <20 Hours                         | $50 (+11%) | $45 (NC)   | $40 (+11%) |

<p>| Receives Benefits                | $47 (+4%)  | $42 (+2%)  | $38 (+3%)  |
| Does Not Receive Benefits        | $50 (NC)   | $45 (NC)   | $40 (+3%)  |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years of Experience</th>
<th>Salaried</th>
<th>Paid Hourly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>5 Years or Less</td>
<td>$40</td>
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<td>36-40 Years</td>
<td>$50</td>
<td>$47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-45 Years</td>
<td>$50</td>
<td>$47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 45 Years</td>
<td>$48</td>
<td>$47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Average Salaries by Years of Experience**

**Average Salaries by How Employee is Paid**

**Salary/Hr Based on How Paid**

- **More Than 40 Hours**
  - High: $49
  - Medium: $43
  - Low: $39

- **32-40 Hours**
  - High: $48
  - Medium: $43
  - Low: $39

- **21-30 Hours**
  - High: $46
  - Medium: $42
  - Low: $38

- **Less Than 20 Hours**
  - High: $39
  - Medium: $41
  - Low: $35

**Salary/Hr Based on Hours Worked/Week**

- **More Than 40 Hours**
  - High: $47
  - Medium: $45
  - Low: $44

- **32-40 Hours**
  - High: $48
  - Medium: $47
  - Low: $45

- **21-30 Hours**
  - High: $46
  - Medium: $44
  - Low: $42

- **Less Than 20 Hours**
  - High: $39
  - Medium: $41
  - Low: $37

**Salary/Hr Based on Benefits Received**

- **Does Not Receive Benefits**
  - High: $31
  - Medium: $35
  - Low: $39

- **Receives Benefits**
  - High: $40
  - Medium: $40
  - Low: $40

[Graphs and charts are not included in this text representation.]
Average Salaries by Hours Worked per Week

Average Salaries by Benefits vs. No Benefits
Therapists were primarily paid either by salary or by the hour. Other ways therapists were paid were per patient, contract, based on productivity and paid from profits. These other ways that therapists were paid account for only 1% of the total responses.

As shown in this graph, the number of hours therapists work varied with the majority working between 32 to 40 hours a week. Hours worked by practice owners were not included in this graph.

Twenty five percent of CHTs reported that they worked more than 40 hours per week and of that 25% over half (65%) were expected to work overtime. Of those who worked overtime 66% were not compensated while 17% were paid for the overtime and 10% were given compensatory time off. Approximately 7% were compensated in other ways negotiated with the owner, such as a bonus or a combination of time-off and extra salary. Some indicated that overtime was included in their salary.
Respondents were asked if they received a salary increase, decrease or if there was no change in their salary in the past year. Results of the 2015 survey were consistent with past surveys; 60% of CHTs received an increase, 37% remained the same and 3% received a salary decrease. In the 2013 survey 55% of CHTs received an increase and 41% remained the same; in the 2009 survey, 64% of CHTs had received an increase and 32% had remained the same; and in 2011 53% of CHTs had received an increase and 41% remained the same.
For those whose salary increased, the percent change was:

- 34%
- 25%
- 19%
- 7%
- 4%
- 2%
- 1%
- 1%

% Salary Increased

- 30%
- 31%
- 31%
- 38%
- 37%
- 34%
- 15%
- 13%

% of CHTs

2013 2011 2009

Change in Salary from 2009 to 2015

- 2013
- 2011
- 2009

% Salary Decreased

- 5%
- 5%
- 4%
- 4%
- 2%
- 11%
- 6%
- 4%

Change in Salary 2015

- Increased
- Remained the Same
- Decreased

% Salary Increased

- 5%
- 5%
- 7%
- 7%
- 4%
- 11%
- 5%
- 4%

% of CHTs
If an increase was received, it was based on:

- **Merit**: 34%
- **Merit & Cost of Living**: 25%
- **Cost of Living**: 19%
- **Position Change/Promotion**: 7%
- **Productivity**: 4%
- **Increased Responsibility**: 2%
- **Profit Margin**: 1%
- **Profit Sharing**: 1%

For those whose salary decreased, the percent was:

- **1%**: 9%
- **2%**: 11%
- **3%**: 7%
- **4%**: 2%
- **5%**: 9%
- **6–10%**: 26%
- **>10%**: 35%
Almost half (45%) of the respondents reported that they received an annual bonus with facility profitability being the primary reason. When given a bonus, it was based on:

- Facility Profitability: 37%
- Individual Productivity: 26%
- Reaching Specific Goals: 17%
- Obtaining CHT Credential: 6%
- Hiring or Retention Incentive: 4%
- Recognition of a Particular Achievement: 3%
- Other: 6%
The majority of respondents received employee benefits. In general wages for full time workers (32-40 hours a week) receiving benefits ranged from $38 to $47 an hour. Wages for full time workers who did not receive benefits ranged from $40 to $50 an hour.
Seventy nine percent of CHTs reported that they received continuing education (CE) benefits, which correlated with the number of hours worked per week as shown below. These numbers were consistent with the 2009, 2011 and 2013 surveys.
For those who received CE benefits, they typically included:

- Meeting Registration: 33%
- Paid Days During Weekend Hours: 25%
- Paid Days Off During Normal Work Hours: 25%
- Travel Expenses: 20%
- Personal Discretion: 7%
- Specific Number of Days: 5%
- Comp During Work Hours: 3%
- Comp During Weekend: 2%

Annual amounts designated for continuing education:

- >$2,000: 5%
- $1,501-$2,000: 11%
- $1,251-$1,500: 13%
- $1,001-$1,250: 9%
- $751-$1,000: 23%
- $501-$750: 12%
- $251-$500: 20%
- $101-$250: 7%
- <$100: 1%
IV. Benefits of Becoming a CHT

In the 2015 survey, 52% reported receiving additional compensation for passing the CHT examination, which was identical to the 2011, 2009 and 2013 surveys. Ninety-six (96) percent indicated that becoming a CHT strengthened their position in the job market.

Rewards included:

- Increase in Base Pay: 85%
- Bonus: 11%
- Promotion: 7%
- Other: 6%

The percentage that reported an increase in base pay (85%) was similar to the 2013 survey. Other rewards were also similar to the 2013 survey and included a better or more interesting job, travel allowance, flexibility, increased referrals, marketing strength, reimbursement of the exam fee, peer recognition, gifts and job security.

V. Demographic & Practice Information

Professional Designation

Ninety percent of the respondents were occupational therapists and 9% were physical therapists; 8 individuals were dually credentialed in both professions. This distribution correlates closely to the overall population of OTs and PTs that are Certified Hand Therapists (85% OTs and 14% PTs).
In the 2015 survey, doctorate degrees were subdivided into Doctorate (PhD) and Clinical Doctorate (i.e. DPT, OTD) degrees. There was a 1% increase in the number of therapists holding a doctorate compared to 2013.

**Highest Degree Obtained**

- Bachelor’s: 63%
- Master’s: 31%
- Clinical Doctorate (OTD, DPT): 5%
- Doctorate (PhD): 1%

**Additional Specialty Certifications Held (not including CHT)**

- Certified Lymphoedema Therapist (CLT): 7%
- Certified Ergonomic Assessment Specialist (CEAS): 5%
- Certified Kinesio Tape Practitioner (CKTP): 4%
- Certified Work Capacity Evaluator (CWCE): 2%
- Certified in Neuro-Developmental Treatment (NDT): 2%
- Dry Needling: 1%
- Registered Nurse/Nurse Practitioner: 1%
- Certified Wound Specialist: 1%
- Orthopedic Clinic Specialist (OCS): 1%
- Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist: 1%
- Certified Massage Therapist (CMT): 1%
- Certified Ergonomic Evaluation Specialist (CEES): 1%
- Certified Athletic Trainer (ATC): 1%
- Other: 7%

“Other” certifications mentioned were ASTYM Certified, Certified Orthopedic Manual Therapist (COMT), Certified Acupuncture Practitioner, Registered Bowen Practitioner, Vestibular Therapist and Graston Technique Provider.
The chart below reflects the difficulty therapists and employers experience in finding and hiring CHTs for open positions. In 2015, 55% indicated difficulty in hiring a CHT.
Summary
HTCC has collected data on salaries and benefits for Certified Hand Therapists and therapists who do not have the CHT credential since 2004. Overall, there has been an increase in salaries across all levels that is generally consistent with the cost of living index for the same time period. Fifty-five percent of respondents reported that they have had trouble finding a CHT to fill a job position, indicating that the employment outlook for CHTs is positive.

For more information about the CHT credential, please contact:

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Email: info@htcc.org   Web: www.htcc.org

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