



CLINICAL REASONING: Why It Matters

*Gina Maria Musolino, PT, DPT, MEd, EdD and
Gail M. Jensen, PT, PhD, FAPTA, FNAP*

*On an important decision one rarely has 100% of the information needed for a good decision no matter how much one spends or how long one waits. And, if one waits too long, he has a different problem and must start all over. This is the terrible dilemma of the hesitant decision maker. —Robert K. Greenleaf, *The Servant As Leader**

OBJECTIVES

- Appreciate the challenges of creating a textbook to address clinical reasoning (CR), teaching, learning, and assessment within physical therapy.
- Conclude that CR is not well understood and remains a complex and iterative process with inherent linkages to learning, learning theories, and domains of learning (eg, affective, cognitive, psychomotor).
- Compare approaches for CR (eg, hypothetico-deductive, pattern recognition, forward thinking, systems thinking).
- Examine the interdependent relationship of CR, clinical problem-solving (CPS), and ongoing development of clinical knowledge.
- Appraise a conceptual figure that represents the many components of CR within the physical therapy profession.
- Support the reflective practitioner in proactively developing goals for CPS-CR, as he or she embarks on this journey of professional development for these foundational and essential elements of practice.