



CHECKLIST: Questions to Prepare for Consulting Session (Part I)

Here are some conversation starters for our consulting sessions. These questions typically take 3-5 hours to knock out.

Not included in this list: My normal list of design consulting questions (Part II) is not included here; however, I would highly recommend that you slot 10-15 hours for us (or someone else) to look over the layout for the pool. I have been to many facilities that have made some very frustrating, unfixable mistakes. Examples:

- Having the only access point to the pool via lock-rooms – which “strands” the therapist in the pool when the changing rooms are occupied.
- Having a wet-path through a hallway with an inadequate friction coefficient.
- Using metal or wood items throughout the room.
- Having no on-deck option for treatment or documentation
- Having the wrong depths or too little of the right depths
- Choosing the wrong temperature
- Having no co-ed changing room options.

I wouldn't be looking at items like heater efficiency, flow rates and disinfection methods (that would be your architect and builder) – but we could save your staff headaches down the line. It's hard to change a wetpath!

Aquatic Staffing Issues

- How should we go about finding aquatic therapists intelligently? What are the best internally and external options?
- Are there supervision requirements for PTAs/COTAs in the pool?
- Can aides be used in pool? How?
- How can we prevent care overlap between disciplines?
- How many hours a day (max) should staff be in water?
- How many hours per week (max) should staff be in water?
- How can we protect our staff from burnout, skin problems, respiratory problems?
- Should pregnant therapists work in the pool? Under what circumstances?
- Can we use contractors in the pool? What are the risks? Benefits?
- Can part-time therapists work 100% of their time in the water?
- What is the best schedule to maximize **productivity**?
- What is the **least stressful** schedule for staff?



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- How many therapists should work in the water at once? Why?
- Should I stagger start times in the pool? If yes, to what benefit?
- Do my therapists have to be certified in aquatic therapy? If so, by who? If not, is there still a reason to do so?
- Do my therapists & aquatic personnel have to be lifeguard trained?
- Do my therapists & aquatic personnel have to be CPOs (certified pool operators)?
- Do I need a lifeguard on deck? When? Why?
- Do I need a person or method to “police” entry to the pool?
- How often does the pool chemistry need to be monitored?
- Should we lease out use of our pool when we are not using it? What issues does this raise? Where can I find a list concerns/ benefits?

Aquatic Billing Issues

- Who can bill for aquatic therapy services under Medicare, Medicaid, and private payers?
- Can an ATC, CTRS or other professional provide services under a licensed therapist’s supervision?
- What CPT code should be used when billing for aquatics? For PT? OT? Speech?
- How do I benefit by billing under 97113? Under 97150? Under 97110?
- What are crosswalks? How does this affect billing under the aquatic therapy code?
- How does the correct coding initiative affect billing under the aquatic therapy code?
- What are LCDs (local coverage determinations)? What are mine? How do these affect billing under the aquatic therapy code?
- How do I prevent denials? How do I reverse denials?
- Should we look into cash-based aquatic services? How does this work?
- What are Medicare’s requirements for use of a pool?
- Do all providers become “one profession” when working in water?

Aquatic Training Issues

- In which techniques should my staff receive training?
- What is the continuum of care after discharge?
- Should we use protocols? Whose?



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- Should we pursue "ATU Inside" status?
- Should we pursue ATU certification? ATRI certification?
- Should all staff (even those who don't plan to work in water) be trained in aquatic therapy? If yes, to what benefit?

Aquatic Equipment Issues

- What therapy and fitness equipment should we have as an essential "starter kit"? How many pieces of each will we need for a pool this size? What brands should we seek out/avoid?
- What safety equipment should we have as required by law? Are there additional items we should consider?
- What kind of lift do we need to be in compliance with ADA? (note: a moveable bottom pool is not considered a primary method of entrance)
- Should we buy swimsuits for our staff? If yes, what brand? What style of suits/ jackets/ shorts/ tankinis, etc? If no, what dress code should we impose?
- What items, if any, should we always provide to patients?
- What items should always be kept on deck?
- How should the deck and equipment be cleaned? On what schedule? By who?
- Do we need an on-deck shower?
- What books should we have in our startup library?
- What videos should we have in our startup library?

Aquatic Environment Issues

- What temperature should we keep the pool water? Or should we change it up?
- What temperature should we keep the pool air?
- What humidity should we keep the pool air?
- What temperature should the changing room air temperature be kept?
- How do we ensure good air exchange?
- How do we prevent water quality issues? Air quality issues?
- Where is a good checklist for opening/closing pool and pool maintenance?
- How often should I drain the pool completely and clean it? How long will it take to reheat?
- How long will I be shut down if there is a fecal accident? Vomit? Blood?
- What CDC standards for MRSA, C-diff, and other infection control?



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- What are the unique legal issues of operating an aquatic therapy practice?

Aquatic Practice and Programming Issues

- How long should each aquatic session be? Benefits/drawbacks of the 30 min/ 45 min and 1 hour visit? Should this be different than land based visits?
- How many visits can each patient have in the pool? Says who?
- Can patients return to aquatics after being in land based care? Under what circumstances?
- How do I decide who should receive aquatic therapy?
- How do I decide when aquatic therapy should be discontinued?
- Can the entire bout of therapy be 100% aquatics?
- Where do the evaluation, reassessment and discharge visits take place?
- How can I protect my facility from legal complications common to aquatic settings?
- Should I offer groups classes? Private pay sessions? Open exercise times? For how much? When?
- Who should I target as pool patients? What populations are natural aquatic participants?
- Should I offer pre-8AM and post-5PM programming? What will this do to my water treatment and quality?
- Should I be open for therapy on Saturday? If not, should I rent use of pool on Saturday?
- How often will my pool have to close down?
- Should I use a floater to "fill in the gaps" for treating patients in the pool? If yes, should this be a therapist, assistant or aide?

Aquatic Resources Available

- Policy and Procedure Manual
- Billing Manual
- Boot Camp DVD
- Aquatic Sensory Integration DVD
- Essential Books
- Essential DVDs