

PHYSICAL THERAPY NEWS

Spring 2000

Official Newsletter of the S.C. Board of Physical Therapy Examiners

South Carolina Board of Physical Therapy Examiners



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Physical Therapy News is published as an informational and educational service to all licensees of the South Carolina Board of Physical Therapy Examiners.

Chairman's Corner

E. Dargan Ervin, Jr., P.T., M.H.S.

For the past four years, it has been both an honor and a pleasure to serve as chairman of the Board of Physical Therapy Examiners. Certainly the most exciting highlights have been the development of a state Board website and the passage and implementation of a new practice act which was signed into law in June 1998. In the very near future, we look forward to the implementation of new regulations and further development of Internet services to include licensure verification, registration for the physical therapy examination and, quite possibly, licensure renewal. The job of a regulatory board is made easier when its licensees work diligently to serve the public in a lawful manner. Based on my experience, it is my opinion that the physical therapists and

physical therapist assistants of South Carolina are conscious of caring for the public in a safe and lawful manner. Like all boards, we have had occasion to discipline a few licensees. However, this represents only a small minority of our total practicing professionals.

I want to thank all South Carolina licensees for making my term as pleasant as possible and my job much easier as the Board's representative before legislators, other licensing boards and the public.

On February 10, 2000, Cynthia Ellis Witherspoon, P.T., was elected Board chairman. I am sure that you will make her term as pleasant and easy as you have made mine. Thank you for your work as dedicated health care professionals.

Status of Physical Therapy Regulations

In the Fall of 1998, the Board filed proposed new regulations with the S.C. General Assembly to support the revised physical therapy practice act. The S.C. Chiropractic Association requested a public hearing on these proposed regulations. The hearing was held on January 18, 1999, before Judge Ralph King Anderson, III, in Columbia. At the hearing, the S.C. Board of Chiropractic Examiners testified that the regulations were unreasonable because there was nothing in them that prohibited physical therapists from administering manipulations. Speaking in support of the reasonableness and necessity of the regulations were Board members Dargan Ervin, Jr., P.T.; Eric Schmidt, P.T.; and Medical University of South Carolina faculty member Dr. David Morrisette.

On June 7, 1999, Judge Anderson ruled that the proposed regulations were reasonable and necessary. Unfortunately, the decision came too late for the regulations to be considered in the 1999 legislative session and were carried over to the 2000 session. In January 2000, the regulations were referred to the House Medical, Military and Municipal Affairs Subcommittee, where two revisions were made to the language that was initially introduced in 1998. The implementation date for the CEU requirement was changed, and the Board added language that defines sexual misconduct. The regulations have been approved by the House of Representatives and have been referred to the Senate for consideration.

The regulations establish the minimal education requirement for physical therapists and physical therapist assistants, outline the process for reactivation of lapsed and inactive licenses, establish the fee schedule for licensure services, define supervision guidelines for physical therapist assistants and define a Code of Ethics for physical therapists and physical therapist assistants.

In addition to these matters, the regulations establish the process for implementation of the continuing education requirement for licensure renewal. Because of the delay for a year due to the public hearing, the Board will not implement the CEU requirement until licenses are renewed as of December 31, 2002. At that time, licensees will be required to report 3.0 CEUs (30 hours) which will have been earned

REGULATIONS continued on p. 3

Help Prepare Your Clients for Disaster

By Cansas Deitz, RN, MSN

In South Carolina, we are faced with approaching hurricanes and other disasters. The clients we are serving are afraid and often ill-prepared. You can help them by assisting in their planning before the hurricane season begins or any disaster occurs. Ask if they have disaster plans. Can they get out of their homes? Ask if and how they plan to leave the area when the evacuation order is given. Suggestions might include contacting relatives out of the evacuation area to discuss visiting out of town during the disaster. Is their residence in the flood and evacuation zone? If they plan to stay in their home, would it be safe?

If the individual must have electricity to survive, they need to evacuate if there is a potential that the power may be interrupted. Oxygen-dependent clients need backup tanks in order to be transported. Remember to take the concentrator when the client is moved. Your local power company can designate the client's home on the White Cross Program, which will restore power on a priority basis.

Public Red Cross Shelters and Special Medical Needs Shelters are available for those with no safe place to go. Remember, a shelter is the choice of last resort. There are many people in a limited amount of space. There is little privacy. Most shelters do not have beds, pillows, medical or personal supplies. A few Special Medical Needs Shelters have beds. Many do not. Caregivers are required to stay with the client. Instruct your

clients to bring all their medications, special equipment, linens and other supplies they may need. No pets are allowed at Red Cross or Special Medical Needs Shelters.

Clients may wish to discuss disaster plans with their physician. The condition of the client will determine if hospital admission is appropriate for that individual. Encourage individuals to pre-register with nursing homes if that level of care is required. Nursing homes may allow for a short admission for several days. Pregnant clients need to discuss plans with their physician.

Individuals requiring ambulance transport must plan well in advance and move before the services are overwhelmed with requests. Encourage individuals to discuss evacuation plans with their friends, neighbors and church friends. Instead of traveling alone, they could travel in a group. This will allow for individuals who cannot drive to have transportation out of harm's way. Inquire at your church and in the faith community about assisting those who need transportation. What a wonderful community project for any group.

Want to help in times of disaster? Call and volunteer with your local Red Cross or with your local DHEC office. Your help would be greatly appreciated. Help your clients complete a Special Medical Needs Shelter Data Form which you can obtain from your local DHEC office.

Deitz is the Special Medical Needs Shelter Coordinator with Trident Public Health District/ SCDHEC.

Did you know?

As of May 2000, the Board has 2,035 licensed physical therapists and 956 licensed physical therapist assistants.

Licensure Verifications

For those who transfer to another state: It costs \$20 to verify your license with a board in another state. Make your check or money order payable to SCBPTE, and send with your request for verification to S.C. Board of Physical Therapy Examiners, P.O. Box 11329, Columbia, SC 29211-1329. Processing takes approximately one week upon receipt of the request and fee.

Important Changes

• Examination Fees

The Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy (FSBPT) is changing its fee schedule for both the physical therapist and physical therapist assistant examinations. The fee increases from \$185 to \$285 and applies to any candidate who sits for the exam on or after July 1, 2000. The increase in the examination fee will be implemented in South Carolina effective April 1, 2000. The FSBPT will refund \$100 to those candidates who sit for the exam prior to July 1, 2000. The refund will be processed within 30 days or less after the date the candidate took the exam.

• Score Transfer Requests

The FSBPT has assumed the responsibility of maintaining the physical therapist and physical therapist assistant data formerly kept by the Interstate Reporting Service at the Professional Examination Service (PES). The information is contained in the National Physical Therapy Licensure Database. If you need to have your test scores transferred to another state, you will need to contact the FSBPT at 1-800-200-3031 to obtain their application for this service. Your candidate identification number and date of the exam can be obtained from the Board where the exam was taken.

The fee schedule is:

Transfer Fee

- \$60 (first-time transfer fee for each exam)
- \$35 (each additional or subsequent request)

Individual Score Report

- \$35 per exam

Expedite Fee

- Additional \$10 for each state

Allow three weeks from the date you mail your transfer request to the FSBPT for the reporting of your scores to the licensing board(s). Processing time with the expedite fee is five business days after FSBPT's receipt of request. If you submit your transfer request via the Internet (<https://www.fsbpt.net/pt>), the request should be processed within one week.

Questions and Answers

The following is a list of questions often asked regarding licensure and the South Carolina Physical Therapy Practice Act. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to write the Board.

Q. Can the periodic reevaluation requirement be satisfied by the physical therapist assistant having a conference or discussion with the physical therapist about the patient's condition?

A. The practice act requires reevaluation of the patient on every eighth treatment day or every 60 calendar days, whichever comes first, when care is provided by the physical therapist assistant. The physical therapist has the authority and obligation to reassess and modify the plan of care and associated physical therapy interventions as appropriate on each visit (whereas a physical therapist assistant does not). The Board considers the reevaluation standard to be satisfied when the physical therapist sees the patient and performs some type of evaluation (as limited or detailed as the physical therapist feels is necessary dependent on the patient's condition). A conference or discussion about the patient will not satisfy the reevaluation standard.

Q. May exercise physiologists and/or athletic trainers document in the physical therapy record?

A. Section 40-45-280 of the Physical Therapy Practice Act establishes the physical therapy record. As the physical therapy record is established to document physical therapy care, only physical therapists, physical therapist assistants and appropriate students are authorized to provide documentation in the physical therapy record. There is nothing in the Physical Therapy Practice Act that prohibits the physical therapy record from being a component of a multi-disciplinary chart. Exercise physiologists and athletic trainers should function in a physical therapy treatment program as aides (guidelines for utilization of nonlicensed personnel are established).

Thus, they should not provide documentation in the physical therapy record.

Q. May physical therapists or physical therapist assistants work as massage therapists?

A. Massage therapy is a regulated profession in South Carolina, and massage therapy services are to be provided by appropriately licensed individuals. Treatment interventions provided by physical therapists and physical therapist assistants should be compliant with the physical therapy practice act. No physical therapist nor physical therapist assistant should hold themselves out as massage therapists unless they are appropriately licensed.

Q. May physical therapist assistants perform any type of screen (restorative, contracture, etc.)?

A. As a screen involves the collection and interpretation of data to reach a conclusion as to the need of skilled physical therapy care, the Board has determined that a screen is an evaluation and that only a physical therapist should perform it.

Q. May physical therapists or physical therapist assistants work as personal trainers?

A. The Physical Therapy Practice Act defines physical therapy as the care and services provided by or under the direction and supervision of a licensed physical therapist. Any such services under the direction and supervision of a licensed physical therapist would need to be compliant with the statute and regulations governing the practice of physical therapy. This would mean that a physical therapist assistant could not undertake to provide care unless there had been an evaluation performed by a physical therapist. A referral from a medical doctor would have to occur if care was to continue beyond 30 days.

Regulations continued from p. 1

between January 1, 2001, and December 31, 2002.

All licensees will be provided with a copy of the regulations once they become effective. The proposed regulations can be reviewed on the S.C. General Assembly website (<http://www.lpitr.state.sc.us>) by searching for document number 2377.

2000 Meeting Dates

The Board of Physical Therapy Examiners meets at 10 a.m. the second Thursday in February, April, June, August, October and December. The meetings are held at the S.C. Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation, Koger Business Park, in the Conference Center of the Kingstree Building, 110 Centerview Drive, Columbia, SC 29210.

Please note: Circumstances beyond our control may necessitate a change in the dates and times of the Board's bimonthly meetings. Contact the Board office to confirm a meeting date.

MOVING?

Keep the Board informed of any changes of address, telephone numbers or name. We want to stay in touch and keep you up-to-date on things you need to know. All name changes require the proper documentation (i.e. marriage certificates, divorce decrees, court orders, etc.)

Complaint Process

If you wish to file a complaint, please contact the Board office for a complaint form. The complaint should detail the alleged violation and include any evidence available. The name, address and telephone number of the licensee should be given along with the same information for the person making the complaint.

Complaints are investigated and the results presented to the Board. Complaints may be dismissed as unfounded or may result in some form of disciplinary action. Disciplinary actions against a licensee or applicant may include denial, restriction, monetary fines, public or private reprimand, probation, suspension or revocation.

We're On the Internet



Check out the S.C. Board of Physical Therapy Examiners on LLR's "home page" on the World Wide Web, or Internet.

If you have ideas or suggestions, contact Lesia Shannon Kudelka, (803) 896-4376 or Donna Delia, (803) 896-4377.

Our address on the Internet is: <http://www.llr.state.sc.us>

South Carolina Board of Physical Therapy Examiners

POST OFFICE BOX 11329

COLUMBIA, SC 29211-1329

Disciplinary Actions

Gaumond, Lori A., PTA

Location: Conway, S.C.

License #: PTA 1131

Violation: Gaumond falsified a visit and travel slip used by her employer to document physical therapist assistance. Violation of S.C. Code Ann. "40-45-200(3) and 40-1-110(d) (Supp. 1997).

Sanction: Public reprimand and license placed in probationary status for 12 months. Terms of Order satisfactorily completed October 21, 1999.

Brown, Eric, PTA

Location: Columbia, S.C.

License #: PTA 1290

Violation: Brown failed to adhere to a formal agreement with the Board for random drug and alcohol screening procedures as specified by the Board. Violation of S.C. Code Ann. "40-1-110 and 40-1-120 and S.C. Code Ann. "40-45-110 through 40-445-130, (Supp. 1997).

Sanction: License suspended for a period of two years, beginning January 1, 1999, and ending December 31, 2000.

Erdmann, Marcene, PT

Location: Greer, S.C.

License #: PT 1622

Violation: Erdmann violated terms of a Consent Order with the Board by consuming alcohol during a period she agreed to remain drug and alcohol free. Violation of S.C. Code Ann. "40-45-120 and 40-1-120 (Supp. 1998).

Sanction: License suspended for 60 days. License reinstated December 14, 1999, in a probationary status for a period of two years contingent upon compliance with Consent Order.