

1 AN ACT concerning regulation.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 5. The Illinois Insurance Code is amended by adding
5 Section 356z.25 as follows:

6 (215 ILCS 5/356z.25 new)

7 Sec. 356z.25. Dry needling by a physical therapist. A group
8 or individual policy of accident and health insurance or a
9 qualified health plan offered through the health insurance
10 market place is not required to provide coverage for dry
11 needling performed by a physical therapist as described in
12 Section 1.5 of the Illinois Physical Therapy Act.

13 Section 10. The Illinois Physical Therapy Act is amended by
14 changing Section 1 and by adding Section 1.5 as follows:

15 (225 ILCS 90/1) (from Ch. 111, par. 4251)

16 (Section scheduled to be repealed on January 1, 2026)

17 Sec. 1. Definitions. As used in this Act:

18 (1) "Physical therapy" means all of the following:

19 (A) Examining, evaluating, and testing individuals who
20 may have mechanical, physiological, or developmental
21 impairments, functional limitations, disabilities, or

1 other health and movement-related conditions, classifying
2 these disorders, determining a rehabilitation prognosis
3 and plan of therapeutic intervention, and assessing the
4 on-going effects of the interventions.

5 (B) Alleviating impairments, functional limitations,
6 or disabilities by designing, implementing, and modifying
7 therapeutic interventions that may include, but are not
8 limited to, the evaluation or treatment of a person through
9 the use of the effective properties of physical measures
10 and heat, cold, light, water, radiant energy, electricity,
11 sound, and air and use of therapeutic massage, therapeutic
12 exercise, mobilization, and rehabilitative procedures,
13 with or without assistive devices, for the purposes of
14 preventing, correcting, or alleviating a physical or
15 mental impairment, functional limitation, or disability.

16 (C) Reducing the risk of injury, impairment,
17 functional limitation, or disability, including the
18 promotion and maintenance of fitness, health, and
19 wellness.

20 (D) Engaging in administration, consultation,
21 education, and research.

22 "Physical therapy" includes, but is not limited to: (a)
23 performance of specialized tests and measurements, (b)
24 administration of specialized treatment procedures, (c)
25 interpretation of referrals from physicians, dentists,
26 advanced practice nurses, physician assistants, and podiatric

1 physicians, (d) establishment, and modification of physical
2 therapy treatment programs, (e) administration of topical
3 medication used in generally accepted physical therapy
4 procedures when such medication is either prescribed by the
5 patient's physician, licensed to practice medicine in all its
6 branches, the patient's physician licensed to practice
7 podiatric medicine, the patient's advanced practice nurse, the
8 patient's physician assistant, or the patient's dentist or used
9 following the physician's orders or written instructions, ~~and~~
10 (f) supervision or teaching of physical therapy, and (g) dry
11 needling in accordance with Section 1.5. Physical therapy does
12 not include radiology, electrosurgery, chiropractic technique
13 or determination of a differential diagnosis; provided,
14 however, the limitation on determining a differential
15 diagnosis shall not in any manner limit a physical therapist
16 licensed under this Act from performing an evaluation pursuant
17 to such license. Nothing in this Section shall limit a physical
18 therapist from employing appropriate physical therapy
19 techniques that he or she is educated and licensed to perform.
20 A physical therapist shall refer to a licensed physician,
21 advanced practice nurse, physician assistant, dentist,
22 podiatric physician, other physical therapist, or other health
23 care provider any patient whose medical condition should, at
24 the time of evaluation or treatment, be determined to be beyond
25 the scope of practice of the physical therapist.

26 (2) "Physical therapist" means a person who practices

1 physical therapy and who has met all requirements as provided
2 in this Act.

3 (3) "Department" means the Department of Professional
4 Regulation.

5 (4) "Director" means the Director of Professional
6 Regulation.

7 (5) "Board" means the Physical Therapy Licensing and
8 Disciplinary Board approved by the Director.

9 (6) "Referral" means a written or oral authorization for
10 physical therapy services for a patient by a physician,
11 dentist, advanced practice nurse, physician assistant, or
12 podiatric physician who maintains medical supervision of the
13 patient and makes a diagnosis or verifies that the patient's
14 condition is such that it may be treated by a physical
15 therapist.

16 (7) "Documented current and relevant diagnosis" for the
17 purpose of this Act means a diagnosis, substantiated by
18 signature or oral verification of a physician, dentist,
19 advanced practice nurse, physician assistant, or podiatric
20 physician, that a patient's condition is such that it may be
21 treated by physical therapy as defined in this Act, which
22 diagnosis shall remain in effect until changed by the
23 physician, dentist, advanced practice nurse, physician
24 assistant, or podiatric physician.

25 (8) "State" includes:

26 (a) the states of the United States of America;

1 (b) the District of Columbia; and

2 (c) the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

3 (9) "Physical therapist assistant" means a person licensed
4 to assist a physical therapist and who has met all requirements
5 as provided in this Act and who works under the supervision of
6 a licensed physical therapist to assist in implementing the
7 physical therapy treatment program as established by the
8 licensed physical therapist. The patient care activities
9 provided by the physical therapist assistant shall not include
10 the interpretation of referrals, evaluation procedures, or the
11 planning or major modification of patient programs.

12 (10) "Physical therapy aide" means a person who has
13 received on the job training, specific to the facility in which
14 he is employed.

15 (11) "Advanced practice nurse" means a person licensed as
16 an advanced practice nurse under the Nurse Practice Act.

17 (12) "Physician assistant" means a person licensed under
18 the Physician Assistant Practice Act of 1987.

19 (Source: P.A. 98-214, eff. 8-9-13; 99-173, eff. 7-29-15;
20 99-229, eff. 8-3-15; 99-642, eff. 7-28-16; revised 10-27-16.)

21 (225 ILCS 90/1.5 new)

22 Sec. 1.5. Dry needling.

23 (a) For the purpose of this Act, "dry needling", also known
24 as intramuscular therapy, means an advanced needling skill or
25 technique limited to the treatment of myofascial pain, using a

1 single use, single insertion, sterile filiform needle (without
2 the use of heat, cold, or any other added modality or
3 medication), that is inserted into the skin or underlying
4 tissues to stimulate trigger points. Dry needling may apply
5 theory based only upon Western medical concepts, requires an
6 examination and diagnosis, and treats specific anatomic
7 entities selected according to physical signs. Dry needling
8 does not include the stimulation of auricular points,
9 utilization of distal points or non-local points, needle
10 retention, application of retained electric stimulation leads,
11 or the teaching or application of other acupuncture theory.

12 (b) A physical therapist licensed under this Act may only
13 perform dry needling under the following conditions as
14 determined by the Department by rule:

15 (1) Prior to completion of the education under
16 paragraph (2) of this subsection, successful completion of
17 50 hours of instruction in the following areas:

18 (A) the musculoskeletal and neuromuscular system;

19 (B) the anatomical basis of pain mechanisms,
20 chronic pain, and referred pain;

21 (C) myofascial trigger point theory; and

22 (D) universal precautions.

23 (2) Completion of at least 30 hours of didactic course
24 work specific to dry needling.

25 (3) Successful completion of at least 54 practicum
26 hours in dry needling course work approved by the

1 Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy or its
2 successor (or substantial equivalent), as determined by
3 the Department. Each instructional course shall specify
4 what anatomical regions are included in the instruction and
5 describe whether the course offers introductory or
6 advanced instruction in dry needling. Each instruction
7 course shall include the following areas:

8 (A) dry needling technique;

9 (B) dry needling indications and
10 contraindications;

11 (C) documentation of dry needling;

12 (D) management of adverse effects;

13 (E) practical psychomotor competency; and

14 (F) the Occupational Safety and Health
15 Administration's Bloodborne Pathogens standard.

16 Postgraduate classes qualifying for completion of the
17 mandated 54 hours of dry needling shall be in one or more
18 modules, with the initial module being no fewer than 27
19 hours, and therapists shall complete at least 54 hours in
20 no more than 12 months.

21 (4) Completion of at least 200 patient treatment
22 sessions under supervision as determined by the Department
23 by rule.

24 (5) Successful completion of a competency examination
25 as approved by the Department.

26 Each licensee is responsible for maintaining records of the

1 completion of the requirements of this subsection (b) and shall
2 be prepared to produce such records upon request by the
3 Department.

4 (c) A newly-licensed physical therapist shall not practice
5 dry needling for at least one year from the date of initial
6 licensure unless the practitioner can demonstrate compliance
7 with subsection (b) through his or her pre-licensure
8 educational coursework.

9 (d) Dry needling may only be performed by a licensed
10 physical therapist and may not be delegated to a physical
11 therapist assistant or support personnel.

12 (e) A physical therapist shall not advertise, describe to
13 patients or the public, or otherwise represent that dry
14 needling is acupuncture, nor shall he or she represent that he
15 or she practices acupuncture unless separately licensed under
16 the Acupuncture Practice Act.

17 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon
18 becoming law.