

REFERENCE TITLE: physical therapy assistants; students; supervision

State of Arizona
Senate
Fifty-sixth Legislature
Second Regular Session
2024

SB 1267

Introduced by
Senator Shope

AN ACT

AMENDING SECTIONS 32-2001 AND 32-2043, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES; RELATING TO THE BOARD OF PHYSICAL THERAPY.

(TEXT OF BILL BEGINS ON NEXT PAGE)

1 Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Arizona:

2 Section 1. Section 32-2001, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
3 read:

4 32-2001. Definitions

5 In this chapter, unless the context otherwise requires:

6 1. "Assistive personnel":

7 (a) Includes:

8 (i) Physical therapist assistants.

9 (ii) Physical therapy aides.

10 (iii) Other assistive personnel who are trained or educated health
11 care providers and who are not physical therapist assistants or physical
12 therapy aides but who perform specific designated tasks related to
13 physical therapy under the supervision of a physical therapist. At the
14 discretion of the supervising physical therapist, and if properly
15 credentialed and not prohibited by any other law, other assistive
16 personnel may be identified by the title specific to their training or
17 education.

18 (b) Does not include EITHER:

19 (i) Personnel assisting other health care professionals licensed
20 pursuant to this title in performing delegable treatment responsibilities
21 within their scope of practice.

22 (ii) STUDENT PHYSICAL THERAPISTS AND STUDENT PHYSICAL THERAPIST
23 ASSISTANTS.

24 2. "Board" means the board of physical therapy.

25 3. "Business entity" means a business organization that has an
26 ownership that includes any persons who are not licensed or certified to
27 provide physical therapy services in this state, that offers to the public
28 professional services regulated by the board and that is established
29 pursuant to the laws of any state or foreign country.

30 4. "Dry needling" means a skilled intervention performed by a
31 physical therapist that uses a thin filiform needle to penetrate the skin
32 and stimulate underlying neural, muscular and connective tissues to
33 evaluate and manage neuromusculoskeletal conditions, pain and movement
34 impairments.

35 5. "General supervision" means that the supervising physical
36 therapist is on call and is readily available via telecommunications when
37 the physical therapist assistant is providing treatment interventions.

38 6. "Interim permit" means a permit issued by the board that allows
39 a person to practice as a physical therapist in this state or to work as a
40 physical therapist assistant for a specific period of time and under
41 conditions prescribed by the board before that person is issued a license
42 or certificate.

43 7. "Manual therapy techniques" means a broad group of passive
44 interventions in which physical therapists use their hands to administer
45 skilled movements designed to modulate pain, increase joint range of

1 motion, reduce or eliminate soft tissue swelling, inflammation or
2 restriction, induce relaxation, improve contractile and noncontractile
3 tissue extensibility, and improve pulmonary function. These interventions
4 involve a variety of techniques, such as the application of graded forces.

5 8. "On-site supervision" means that the supervising physical
6 therapist is on site and is present in the facility or on the campus where
7 assistive personnel, ~~or~~ a holder of an interim permit, **A STUDENT PHYSICAL**
8 **THERAPIST OR A STUDENT PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT** is performing
9 services, is immediately available to assist the person being supervised
10 in the services being performed and maintains continued involvement in
11 appropriate aspects of each treatment session in which a component of
12 treatment is delegated.

13 9. "Physical therapist" means a person who is licensed pursuant to
14 this chapter.

15 10. "Physical therapist assistant" means a person who meets the
16 requirements of this chapter for certification and who performs physical
17 therapy procedures ~~and related tasks that have been selected and delegated~~
18 **by ACCORDING TO THE PHYSICAL THERAPY PLAN OF CARE UNDER THE ON-SITE**
19 **SUPERVISION OF** the supervising physical therapist.

20 11. "Physical therapy" means the care and services provided by or
21 under the direction and supervision of a physical therapist who is
22 licensed pursuant to this chapter.

23 12. "Physical therapy aide" means a person who is trained under the
24 direction of a physical therapist and who performs designated and
25 supervised routine physical therapy tasks.

26 13. "Practice of physical therapy" means:

27 (a) Examining, evaluating and testing persons who have mechanical,
28 physiological and developmental impairments, functional limitations and
29 disabilities or other health and movement related conditions in order to
30 determine a diagnosis, a prognosis and a plan of therapeutic intervention
31 and to assess the ongoing effects of intervention, including ordering
32 musculoskeletal imaging consisting of plain film radiographs.

33 (b) Alleviating impairments and functional limitations by managing,
34 designing, implementing and modifying therapeutic interventions including:

35 (i) Therapeutic exercise.

36 (ii) Functional training in self-care and in home, community or
37 work reintegration.

38 (iii) Manual therapy techniques.

39 (iv) Therapeutic massage.

40 (v) Assistive and adaptive orthotic, prosthetic, protective and
41 supportive devices and equipment.

42 (vi) Pulmonary hygiene.

43 (vii) Debridement and wound care.

44 (viii) Physical agents or modalities.

45 (ix) Mechanical and electrotherapeutic modalities.

1 (x) Patient related instruction.

2 (c) Reducing the risk of injury, impairments, functional
3 limitations and disability by means that include promoting and maintaining
4 a person's fitness, health and quality of life.

5 (d) Engaging in administration, consultation, education and
6 research.

7 14. "Restricted certificate" means a certificate on which the board
8 places any restrictions as the result of a disciplinary action.

9 15. "Restricted license" means a license on which the board places
10 restrictions or conditions, or both, as to the scope of practice, place of
11 practice, supervision of practice, duration of licensed status or type or
12 condition of a patient to whom the licensee may provide services.

13 16. "Restricted registration" means a registration on which the
14 board places any restrictions as the result of disciplinary action.

15 17. "STUDENT PHYSICAL THERAPIST" MEANS A PERSON WHO IS ENROLLED IN A
16 DOCTOR OF PHYSICAL THERAPY PROGRAM THAT IS ACCREDITED BY OR HAS CANDIDATE
17 STATUS BY THE COMMISSION ON ACCREDITATION IN PHYSICAL THERAPY EDUCATION.

18 18. "STUDENT PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT" MEANS A PERSON WHO IS
19 ENROLLED IN AN ACADEMIC PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT PROGRAM THAT IS
20 ACCREDITED BY OR HAS CANDIDATE STATUS BY THE COMMISSION ON ACCREDITATION
21 IN PHYSICAL THERAPY EDUCATION.

22 Sec. 2. Section 32-2043, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to
23 read:

24 32-2043. Supervision; patient care management

25 A. A physical therapist is responsible for patient care given by
26 assistive personnel, STUDENT PHYSICAL THERAPISTS AND STUDENT PHYSICAL
27 THERAPY ASSISTANTS under the physical therapist's supervision. A physical
28 therapist may delegate to assistive personnel and supervise selected acts,
29 tasks or procedures that fall within the scope of physical therapy
30 practice but that do not exceed the education or training of the assistive
31 personnel.

32 B. A physical therapist assistant WHO IS certified pursuant to this
33 chapter may ~~perform selected interventions~~ PROVIDE PHYSICAL THERAPY
34 SERVICES under the general supervision of a physical therapist WHO IS
35 licensed pursuant to this chapter.

36 C. A physical therapy aide and other assistive personnel shall
37 perform designated routine tasks only under the on-site supervision of a
38 licensed physical therapist ~~who is present in the facility~~.

39 D. A licensed physical therapist must provide on-site supervision
40 of an interim permit holder.

41 E. A physical therapist student and a physical therapist assistant
42 student must practice under the on-site supervision of a licensed physical
43 therapist.

- 1 F. A physical therapist is responsible for managing all aspects of
2 the physical therapy care of each patient. A physical therapist must
3 provide:
- 4 1. The initial evaluation of and documentation for a patient.
 - 5 2. Periodic reevaluation of and documentation for a patient.
 - 6 3. The documented discharge of a patient, including the response to
7 therapeutic intervention at the time of discharge.
- 8 G. A physical therapist must verify the qualifications of physical
9 therapist assistants and other assistive personnel under the physical
10 therapist's direction and supervision.
- 11 H. For each patient on each date of service, a physical therapist
12 must provide and document all of the therapeutic intervention that
13 requires the expertise of a physical therapist ~~and must determine the use~~
14 ~~of physical therapist assistants and other assistive personnel~~ to ensure
15 the delivery of care that is safe, effective and efficient. Documentation
16 for each date of service must be as prescribed by the board by rule.
- 17 I. A physical therapist assistant must document care provided but
18 may do so without the ~~co-signature~~ COSIGNATURE of the supervising physical
19 therapist if the physical therapist complies with the requirements of
20 subsections G and H OF THIS SECTION.
- 21 J. A physical therapist's responsibility for patient care
22 management includes accurate documentation and billing of the services
23 provided.