

65-2921. Evaluation and treatment by physical therapists; when referral is required; exceptions. (a)

Except as otherwise provided in subsection (d), a physical therapist may evaluate and initiate physical therapy treatment on a patient without referral from a licensed health care practitioner. If treating a patient without a referral from a licensed health care practitioner and the patient is not progressing toward documented treatment goals as demonstrated by objective, measurable or functional improvement, or any combination thereof, after 10 patient visits or in a period of 15 business days from the initial treatment visits following the initial evaluation visit, the physical therapist shall obtain a referral from an appropriate licensed health care practitioner prior to continuing treatment.

(b) Physical therapists may provide, without a referral, services to: (1) Employees solely for the purpose of education and instruction related to workplace injury prevention; or (2) the public for the purpose of fitness, health promotion and education.

(c) Physical therapists may provide services without a referral to special education students who need physical therapy services to fulfill the provisions of their individualized education plan (IEP) or individualized family service plan (IFSP).

(d) Nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent a hospital or ambulatory surgical center from requiring a physician order or referral for physical therapy services for a patient currently being treated in such facility.

(e) When a patient self-refers to a physical therapist pursuant to this section, the physical therapist, prior to commencing treatment, shall provide written notice to the patient that a physical therapy diagnosis is not a medical diagnosis by a physician.

(f) Physical therapists shall perform wound debridement services only after approval by a person licensed to practice medicine and surgery or other licensed health care practitioner in appropriately related cases.

(g) As used in this section, "licensed health care practitioner" means a person licensed to practice medicine and surgery, a licensed podiatrist, a licensed physician assistant or a licensed advanced practice registered nurse working pursuant to the order or direction of a person licensed to practice medicine and surgery, a licensed chiropractor, a licensed dentist or licensed optometrist in appropriately related cases.

History: L. 2007, ch. 177, § 21; L. 2011, ch. 114, § 56; L. 2013, ch. 4, § 1; July 1.