

4755-27-04

Delegation of tasks to unlicensed individuals.

(A) For the purpose of this chapter of the Administrative Code, the following definitions shall apply:

(1) "Unlicensed supportive physical therapy personnel" means individuals who are on the job trained by the physical therapist and who participate in physical therapy patient care delivery.

(2) "Other assistive physical therapy personnel" means any person not holding a valid license under section 4755.40 to 4755.56 of the Revised Code, who are working under the direction of a physical therapist or physical therapist assistant performing tasks and duties related to the delivery of physical therapy.

(B) The primary function of:

(1) Unlicensed supportive physical therapy personnel functioning under the supervision of physical therapists or physical therapist assistants is to perform designated routine tasks related to the operation and delivery of physical therapy.

A physical therapist or physical therapist assistant shall provide immediate availability, ongoing involvement, and on-site supervision to unlicensed supportive physical therapy personnel to whom they delegate physical therapy tasks and duties.

(2) Other assistive physical therapy personnel is to perform designated and delegated functions related to the operation and delivery of physical therapy, utilizing their specific and unique training, under the on-site supervision of a physical therapist or physical therapist assistant.

(C) Physical therapists and physical therapist assistants shall only delegate tasks and duties that fall within the physical therapy scope of practice.

(D) Physical therapists and physical therapist assistants shall not delegate to unlicensed supportive physical therapy personnel or other assistive physical therapy personnel tasks related to physical therapy, including:

(1) Interpretation of physician referrals;

(2) Performance of evaluative procedures;

(3) Initiation or adjustment of treatment procedures or activities; and

(4) Responsibility for planning patient care.

(E) For the purposes of this rule, it is not considered a delegation of physical therapy

tasks or duties if a physical therapist refers a patient to another discipline and documents the referral in the patient's medical records.

(F) Physical therapists shall not consider unlicensed supportive physical therapy personnel or other assistive physical therapy personnel as being as skilled, competent, knowledgeable, or qualified as the licensed physical therapist assistant in the delivery of physical therapy. Therefore, the tasks delegated to the unlicensed supportive physical therapy personnel or other assistive physical therapy personnel shall not be the same type or level as the tasks delegated to the physical therapist assistant.

Physical therapists shall assure quality and competent care when using unlicensed supportive physical therapy personnel or other assistive physical therapy personnel in physical therapy through appropriate supervision and delegation of duties as outlined.

(G) The physical therapist shall recognize the difference in education and training of physical therapy workers and shall assume responsibility for controlling the physical therapy duties and activities delegated to unlicensed supportive physical therapy personnel and other assistive physical therapy personnel.

(H) All physical therapy tasks and duties delegated by the physical therapist or physical therapist assistant to the unlicensed supportive physical therapy personnel or other assistive physical therapy personnel shall be in accordance with sections 4755.40 to 4755.56 of the Revised Code. The physical therapist or physical therapist assistant shall demonstrate involvement in each treatment session, including countersigning notes in medical records, in which a component of the session is delegated to the unlicensed supportive physical therapy personnel or other assistive physical therapy personnel.

(1) The physical therapist or physical therapist assistant shall not delegate to a less qualified person any activity which requires the unique skills, knowledge and judgment of the physical therapist or physical therapist assistant. The responsibility for physical therapy care rendered by unlicensed supportive physical therapy personnel or other assistive physical therapy personnel, rests at all times with the physical therapist.

(2) Adequate supervision requires at a minimum:

(a) Establishing channels of written and oral communication.

(b) Interpreting available information concerning the individual requiring care.

(c) Exercising professional judgment in selecting and delegating appropriate tasks and activities, taking into consideration the training and competence of the unlicensed supportive physical therapy personnel

and other assistive physical therapy personnel, the condition of the individual requiring the care, and any precautions, special problems or contraindications.

(d) Assessing the competence of unlicensed supportive physical therapy personnel and other assistive physical therapy personnel to perform assigned tasks.

(e) Exercising professional judgment in determining the extent of supervision or involvement in the physical therapy activity that is required of the physical therapist or physical therapist assistant. The level of supervision shall be based on the competency and experience of the unlicensed individual.

(I) Duties or functions that physical therapists or physical therapist assistants under the supervision of a physical therapist may delegate to unlicensed supportive physical therapy personnel or other assistive physical therapy personnel in physical therapy includes, but is not limited to:

(1) Maintenance and care of equipment and supplies.

(2) Preparation, maintenance and cleanup of treatment areas.

(3) Transportation of patient records, equipment and supplies.

(4) Performance of general office procedures (such as filing, attendance, reception, etc.).

(5) Assisting patients preparing for, during, and at the conclusion of treatment (such as change clothing, position for treatment, assist to transfer, alter position during treatment, drape for warmth and modesty, redress, etc.).

(6) Assemble and disassemble equipment; prepare specific area for treatment; return equipment to storage, etc.

(7) Assist patients to safely perform activities related to the development of strength and endurance.

(8) Perform other patient related activities previously determined and assigned by the licensed physical therapist based upon a knowledge of the training and qualification of the unlicensed person.

(J) Student physical therapists and student physical therapist assistants.

(1) Any individual enrolled in an accredited entry level physical therapy educational program is considered:

(a) A student physical therapist if the individual is enrolled in an accredited entry level physical therapist educational program.

(b) A student physical therapist assistant if the individual is enrolled in an accredited entry level physical therapist assistant educational program.

(2) Student physical therapists and student physical therapist assistants are unlicensed persons.

(3) Supervision requirements.

(a) The student physical therapist or student physical therapist assistant shall at all times function under the on-site supervision of a licensed physical therapist.

(b) The student physical therapist assistant shall at all times function under the on-site supervision of a licensed physical therapist or licensed physical therapist assistant.

(4) A student physical therapist or student physical therapist assistant shall be designated by a title that clearly indicates student status.

(5) Appropriate documentation.

(a) Appropriate documentation for a student physical therapist is the individual's signature followed by the words "student physical therapist."

(b) Appropriate documentation for a student physical therapist assistant is the individual's signature followed by the words "student physical therapist assistant."

(c) All documentation shall have the appropriate countersignature.

(d) The designations SPT, SPTA, student PT, or student PTA shall not be used to indicate student status in documentation.

(K) Licensure applicant status.

(1) An individual who graduated from an academic program of physical therapy may retain student status as a licensure applicant provided:

(a) The applicant graduated from an accredited academic program in physical therapy approved by the physical therapy section;

(b) The physical therapy section approved the individual's application for

licensure by examination in the state of Ohio pursuant to rule 4755-23-01 of the Administrative Code; and

(c) The applicant receives notification from the section that the section approved the applicant to sit for the examination specified in rule 4755-23-03 of the Administrative Code.

(2) An individual shall hold licensure applicant status until the results of the examination are made public or for sixty days from the date the section notifies the applicant that the applicant is approved to sit for the examination, whichever occurs first.

(a) Licensure applicant status automatically ceases when the examination results are publicly available, whether these results are passing or failing.

(b) Licensure applicant status is not renewable.

(3) Licensure applicant supervision and documentation.

(a) A physical therapist licensure applicant requires on-site supervision by a physical therapist.

(b) A physical therapist assistant licensure applicant requires on-site supervision by a physical therapist or physical therapist assistant.

(c) Appropriate documentation for licensure applicants is the individual's signature, followed by the words "licensure applicant." All documentation shall have the appropriate countersignature.

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