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SENATE BILL 5907

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State of Washington

57th Legislature

2001 Regular Session

By Senators Rasmussen, Winsley, Franklin, Deccio and Regala

Read first time 02/07/2001. Referred to Committee on Health & Long-Term Care.

1 AN ACT Relating to physical therapist assistants; amending RCW  
2 18.74.010, 18.74.020, 18.74.040, 18.74.060, 18.74.070, 18.74.090, and  
3 18.74.120; and adding new sections to chapter 18.74 RCW.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 **Sec. 1.** RCW 18.74.010 and 1997 c 275 s 8 are each amended to read  
6 as follows:

7 Unless the context otherwise requires, the definitions in this  
8 section apply throughout this chapter.

9 (1) "Board" means the board of physical therapy created by RCW  
10 18.74.020.

11 (2) "Department" means the department of health.

12 (3) "Physical therapy" means the treatment of any bodily or mental  
13 condition of any person by the use of the physical, chemical, and other  
14 properties of heat, cold, air, light, water, electricity, sound,  
15 massage, and therapeutic exercise, which includes posture and  
16 rehabilitation procedures; the performance of tests and measurements of  
17 neuromuscular function as an aid to the diagnosis or treatment of any  
18 human condition; performance of treatments on the basis of test  
19 findings after consultation with and periodic review by an authorized

1 health care practitioner except as provided in RCW 18.74.012;  
2 supervision of selective forms of treatment by trained supportive  
3 personnel; and provision of consultative services for health,  
4 education, and community agencies. The use of Roentgen rays and radium  
5 for diagnostic and therapeutic purposes, the use of electricity for  
6 surgical purposes, including cauterization, and the use of spinal  
7 manipulation or manipulative mobilization of the spine and its  
8 immediate articulations, are not included under the term "physical  
9 therapy" as used in this chapter.

10 (4) "Physical therapist" means a person who practices physical  
11 therapy as defined in this chapter but does not include massage  
12 operators as defined in RCW 18.108.010.

13 (5) "Secretary" means the secretary of health.

14 (6) Words importing the masculine gender may be applied to females.

15 (7) "Authorized health care practitioner" means and includes  
16 licensed physicians, osteopathic physicians, chiropractors,  
17 naturopaths, podiatric physicians and surgeons, dentists, and advanced  
18 registered nurse practitioners: PROVIDED, HOWEVER, That nothing herein  
19 shall be construed as altering the scope of practice of such  
20 practitioners as defined in their respective licensure laws.

21 (8) "Physical therapist assistant" means a person who meets the  
22 requirements of this chapter for licensure as a physical therapist  
23 assistant and who performs physical therapy procedures and related  
24 tasks that have been selected and delegated only by the supervising  
25 physical therapist.

26 **Sec. 2.** RCW 18.74.020 and 1991 c 3 s 174 are each amended to read  
27 as follows:

28 The state board of physical therapy is hereby created. The board  
29 shall consist of five members who shall be appointed by the governor.  
30 Of the initial appointments, two shall be appointed for a term of two  
31 years, two for a term of three years, and one for a term of four years.  
32 Thereafter, all appointments shall be for terms of four years.  
33 (~~Four~~) Three members of the board shall be physical therapists  
34 licensed under this chapter and residing in this state, and one member  
35 shall be a physical therapist assistant licensed under this chapter and  
36 residing in this state. They shall have not less than five years'  
37 experience in the practice of physical therapy, and shall be actively  
38 engaged in practice within two years of appointment. The fifth member

1 shall be appointed from the public at large, shall have an interest in  
2 the rights of consumers of health services, and shall not be or have  
3 been a member of any other licensing board, a licensee of any health  
4 occupation board, an employee of any health facility nor derive his or  
5 her primary livelihood from the provision of health services at any  
6 level of responsibility. In the event that a member of the board for  
7 any reason cannot complete his or her term of office, another  
8 appointment shall be made by the governor in accordance with the  
9 procedure stated above to fill the remainder of the term. No member  
10 may serve for more than two successive four-year terms.

11 The secretary of health shall furnish such secretarial, clerical  
12 and other assistance as the board may require. Each member of the  
13 board shall, in addition to travel expenses in accordance with RCW  
14 43.03.050 and 43.03.060, be compensated in accordance with RCW  
15 43.03.240.

16 **Sec. 3.** RCW 18.74.040 and 1991 c 3 s 177 are each amended to read  
17 as follows:

18 (1) The secretary of health shall license as a physical therapist,  
19 and shall furnish a license to each applicant who successfully passes  
20 the examination for licensure as a physical therapist.

21 (2) The secretary of health shall license as a physical therapist  
22 assistant, and shall furnish a license to each applicant who  
23 successfully passes, the examination for licensure as a physical  
24 therapist assistant.

25 **Sec. 4.** RCW 18.74.060 and 1996 c 191 s 60 are each amended to read  
26 as follows:

27 Upon the recommendation of the board, the secretary shall license  
28 as a physical therapist or physical therapist assistant and shall  
29 furnish a license to any person who is a physical therapist registered  
30 or licensed under the laws of another state or territory, or the  
31 District of Columbia, or any person who is a physical therapist  
32 assistant licensed under the laws of another state or territory, or the  
33 District of Columbia, if the qualifications for such registration or  
34 license required of the applicant were substantially equal to the  
35 requirements under this chapter. At the time of making application,  
36 the applicant shall comply with administrative procedures,

1 administrative requirements, and fees established pursuant to RCW  
2 43.70.250 and 43.70.280.

3 **Sec. 5.** RCW 18.74.070 and 1996 c 191 s 61 are each amended to read  
4 as follows:

5 Every licensed physical therapist and physical therapist assistant  
6 shall apply to the secretary for a renewal of the license and pay to  
7 the state treasurer a fee determined by the secretary as provided in  
8 RCW 43.70.250 and 43.70.280.

9 **Sec. 6.** RCW 18.74.090 and 1991 c 3 s 181 are each amended to read  
10 as follows:

11 (1) A person who is not licensed with the secretary of health as a  
12 physical therapist under the requirements of this chapter shall not  
13 represent him or herself as being so licensed and shall not use in  
14 connection with his or her name the words or letters "P.T.", "R.P.T.",  
15 "L.P.T.", "physical therapy", "physiotherapy", "physical therapist" or  
16 "physiotherapist", or any other letters, words, signs, numbers, or  
17 insignia indicating or implying that he or she is a physical therapist.  
18 No person may practice physical therapy without first having a valid  
19 license.

20 (2) No person may use the title "physical therapist assistant," the  
21 letters "PTA," or any other words, abbreviations, or insignia in  
22 connection with his or her name to indicate or imply, directly or  
23 indirectly, that he or she is a physical therapist assistant without  
24 being licensed in accordance with this chapter as a physical therapist  
25 assistant.

26 (3) Nothing in this chapter prohibits any person licensed in this  
27 state under any other act from engaging in the practice for which he or  
28 she is licensed. It shall be the duty of the prosecuting attorney of  
29 each county to prosecute all cases involving a violation of this  
30 chapter arising within his or her county. The attorney general may  
31 assist in such prosecution and shall appear at all hearings when  
32 requested to do so by the board.

33 **Sec. 7.** RCW 18.74.120 and 1991 c 3 s 183 are each amended to read  
34 as follows:

35 The secretary of health shall keep a record of proceedings under  
36 this chapter and a register of all persons licensed under it. The

1 register shall show the name of every living licensed physical  
2 therapist and physical therapist assistant, his or her last known place  
3 of residence, and the date and number of his or her license as a  
4 physical therapist or physical therapist assistant.

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 8.** A new section is added to chapter 18.74 RCW  
6 to read as follows:

7 (1) The board shall waive the examination and grant a license to a  
8 person who is practicing as a physical therapist assistant in this  
9 state on the effective date of this section, if the board determines  
10 that the person meets commonly accepted standards for practicing as a  
11 physical therapist assistant, as established by rule.

12 (2) Persons eligible for licensure as a physical therapist  
13 assistant under subsection (1) of this section shall apply for a  
14 license under RCW 18.74.040 before December 1, 2001.

15 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 9.** A new section is added to chapter 18.74 RCW  
16 to read as follows:

17 (1) An applicant for a license as a physical therapist assistant  
18 shall have the following minimum qualifications:

19 (a) Be of good moral character;

20 (b) Be a graduate of a physical therapist assistant education  
21 program accredited by an agency approved by the board; and

22 (c) Have successfully passed the national examination approved by  
23 the board.

24 (2) The applicant shall present proof of qualification to the board  
25 in the manner and on the forms prescribed by the board.

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