

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1230

As Reported by House Committee On:
Health Care & Wellness

Title: An act relating to persons who are pursuing a course of study leading to a degree as a physical therapist or physical therapist assistant.

Brief Description: Concerning persons who are pursuing a course of study leading to a degree as a physical therapist or physical therapist assistant.

Sponsors: Representatives Green, Warnick, Jinkins, Harris, Cody, Moeller, Clibborn, Morrell and Tharinger.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Health Care & Wellness: 2/1/13, 2/8/13 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows a person in a physical therapy assistant education program to be supervised by a licensed physical therapist assistant.
- Clarifies that the limit on the number of assistive personnel a physical therapist may supervise does not include persons in physical therapy or physical therapy assistant education programs.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE & WELLNESS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 16 members: Representatives Cody, Chair; Jinkins, Vice Chair; Schmick, Ranking Minority Member; Hope, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Angel, Clibborn, Green, Harris, Manweller, Moeller, Morrell, Riccelli, Ross, Short, Tharinger and Van De Wege.

Staff: Jim Morishima (786-7191).

Background:

Physical therapy is based on movement science and includes a variety of functions and services such as:

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- examining, evaluating, and testing individuals with health and movement-related conditions to determine a diagnosis, prognosis, plan of therapeutic intervention, and to assess and document the ongoing effects of intervention;
- alleviating impairments and functional limitations in movement;
- training for, and the evaluation of, the function of a patient wearing an orthosis or prosthesis;
- performing certain wound care services;
- reducing the risk of injury, impairment, functional limitation, and disability related to movement; and
- engaging in administration, consultation, education, and research.

A physical therapist may supervise no more than two assistive personnel at any one time.

Generally, people need to be licensed as a physical therapist or a physical therapist assistant in order to practice physical therapy. However, a person does not need to be licensed as a physical therapist assistant if he or she is pursuing a course of study leading to a degree as a physical therapist assistant in an approved professional educational program and is satisfying supervised clinical education requirements related to his or her physical therapist assistant education while under the direct supervision of a licensed physical therapist.

Summary of Bill:

A person satisfying supervised clinical education requirements related to a course of study leading to a degree as a physical therapist assistant may be supervised by a licensed physical therapist assistant (in addition to a licensed physical therapist). The limitation on the number of assistive personnel a physical therapist may supervise does not include people who are pursuing a course of study leading to a degree as a physical therapist or a physical therapist assistant.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This bill will help the state get more physical therapy assistants trained, which will be needed as insurance coverage increases under the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. This bill corrects an ambiguity in the original physical therapy assistant licensing statute. There are currently not enough physical therapists to meet the needs of physical therapy assistant students in their clinical placements. The practice of physical

therapy assistants supervising physical therapy assistant students is recognized by national accrediting authorities, physical therapy associations, and Medicare.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Green, prime sponsor; and Elaine Armantrout, Physical Therapy Association of Washington.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.