

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## HB 1230

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As Reported by Senate Committee On:  
Health Care, March 18, 2013

**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:** Passed House: 2/22/13, 96-0.

**Committee Activity:** Health Care: 3/14/13, 3/18/13 [DPA].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

**Majority Report:** Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Becker, Chair; Dammeier, Vice Chair; Keiser, Ranking Member; Bailey, Cleveland, Ericksen, Frockt, Parlette and Schlicher.

**Staff:** Kathleen Buchli (786-7488)

**Background:** The practice of physical therapy is based on movement and science, and involves evaluating individuals with functional limitations in movement in order to determine a plan of therapeutic intervention that includes therapeutic exercise, therapeutic massage, and patient-related instruction. Both physical therapists and physical therapist assistants must be licensed by the Department of Health. Physical therapist assistants perform physical therapy procedures and related tasks that are delegated by a supervising physical therapist. These tasks must fall within the scope of the physical therapy practice and may not exceed the education or training of the physical therapy assistant.

Physical therapist assistants are not required to be licensed if they are pursuing a physical therapist assistant degree and satisfying clinical education requirements while under the direct supervision of a licensed physical therapist. Physical therapists are permitted to supervise a total of two assistive personnel.

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

**Summary of Bill (Recommended Amendments):** A physical therapist assistant is not required to be licensed if the physical therapist assistant is pursuing a physical therapist assistant degree and satisfying clinical education requirements while under the direct supervision of a licensed physical therapist or a licensed physical therapist assistant.

Physical therapists may supervise two assistive personnel and up to two students pursuing a course of study leading to a degree as a physical therapist or a physical therapist assistant.

**EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY HEALTH CARE COMMITTEE (Recommended Amendments):** The number of students that may be supervised by a physical therapist is limited to two.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony on House Bill:** PRO: The intention of the physical therapist assistant licensing provisions has always been to be able to use licensed physical therapist assistants in a clinical setting. Allowing licensed physical therapist assistants to supervise would increase access to physical therapy. Not allowing licensed physical therapist assistants to supervise students is an oversight and this bill corrects that. The number of students who could be supervised is up to the school and they are protective of their students; it would be rare to allow supervision of more than two students.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Representative Green, prime sponsor; Elaine Armantrout, Physical Therapy Assn. of WA.