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provided for in the Regulation

Document No. 4248

**BOARD OF PHYSICAL THERAPY EXAMINERS**

CHAPTER 101

Statutory Authority: 1976 Code Sections 40-1-70 and 40-45-10 et seq.

101-04. General Licensing Provisions for Physical Therapists.

101-05. General Licensing Provisions for Physical Therapist Assistants.

101-07. Continuing Education.

101-08. Fees.

101-09. Supervision Guidelines.

101-10. Use of Aides in the Practice of Physical Therapy.

**Synopsis:**

To satisfy the requirements of licensure for physical therapists, Regulations 101-04 through 101-05, and 101-07 through 101-10 are updated in conformance with the current Physical Therapy Practice Act.

The Notice of Drafting was published in the *State Register* on November 25, 2011.

**Instructions:**

The following sections of Chapter 101 are modified as provided below. All other items and sections remain unchanged.

**Text:**

ARTICLE 3

LICENSING PROVISIONS

101-04. General Licensing Provisions for Physical Therapists.

An applicant for licensure as a physical therapist must:

(1) be a graduate of a physical therapy educational program approved by the Board; or, if foreign educated, must have a credentials evaluation by a Board approved credentialing evaluation agency that determines the applicant’s education is substantially equivalent to the education of physical therapists educated in an accredited entry level program as determined by the Board. To determine substantial equivalency, the approved credentialing evaluation agency shall use the appropriate Course Work Tool (“CWT”) adopted by the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy. The appropriate CWT means the CWT in place at the time the foreign educated physical therapist graduated from their physical therapy program;

(2) submit an application on a form approved by the Board, along with the required fee; and

(3) speak the English language as a native language or demonstrate an effective proficiency of the English language in the manner prescribed by and to the satisfaction of the board; and

(4) pass an examination approved by the Board; and

(5) submit proof of not less than one thousand (1000) clinical practice hours under the on-site supervision of a licensed physical therapist on a form approved by the Board if the applicant is not a graduate of an approved school.

101-05. General Licensing Provisions for Physical Therapist Assistants.

An applicant for initial licensure as a physical therapist assistant must:

(1) be a graduate of a physical therapist assistant program approved by the Board; and

(2) submit an application on a form approved by the Board, along with the required fee; and

(3) pass an examination approved by the Board; and

(4) speak the English language as a native language or demonstrate an effective proficiency of the English language in the manner prescribed by and to the satisfaction of the board.

ARTICLE 4

CONTINUING EDUCATION

101-07. Continuing Education.

Continuing education requirements become effective upon approval by the Governor and must first be reported beginning in 2002 and thereafter.

(1) Every licensed physical therapist and physical therapist assistant shall earn 3.0 CEUs or thirty (30) hours of acceptable continuing education credit per biennium year.

(2) Physical therapists and physical therapist assistants licensed in South Carolina will not have a CEU requirement for the first biennium renewal period in which they are initially licensed. Graduates of a Board approved educational program and initially licensed are said to have met the CEU requirement for the first biennium renewal year.

(3) Standards for approval of continuing education. A continuing education activity which meets all of the following criteria is appropriate for continuing education credit:

(a) it constitutes an organized program of learning (including a workshop or symposium) which contributes directly to the professional competency of the licensee; and

(b) it pertains to common subjects or other subject matters which integrally relate to the practice of physical therapy; and

(c) it is conducted by individuals who have a special education, training, and experience by reason of which said individuals should be considered experts concerning the subject matter of the program and is accompanied by a paper, manual, or outline which substantively pertains to the subject matter of the program and reflects program schedule, including:

(1) fulfilling stated program goals or objectives, or both;

(2) providing proof of attendance to include original certificate with participant's name, date, place, course title, presenter(s), and number of program contact hours; and

(d) the Board will not grant prior approval but each licensee will be responsible for ensuring that each course submitted for continuing education credit meets these standards.

(4) The following courses are automatically approved for required contact hours:

(a) APTA (American Physical Therapy Association) and SCAPTA (South Carolina American Physical Therapy Association) sponsored courses. APTA home study courses, and courses sponsored by other state professional physical therapy associations; and

(b) college course work which is judged germane to the practice of physical therapy and is conducted or sponsored by accredited institutions of higher education; and

(c) AMA (American Medical Association) continuing education courses that involve physical therapy; and

(d) in-service hours totaling 0.4 CEUs maximum per biennium; and

(e) CPR of 0.4 CEUs per biennium; and

(f) any appropriate physical therapy continued competency tools developed by the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy (FSBPT) and/or the American Physical Therapy Association; the Board will assign contact hour credit to each appropriate tool on a case by case basis;

(g) achievement or renewal of any Clinical Specialist Certification through the American Physical Therapy Association will be considered as meeting the education requirement for the entire licensure biennium in which the certification or renewal is received; and

(h) such other providers as approved by the Board.

(5) Unacceptable activities for continuing education include, but are not limited to:

(a) presenting at professional meetings, conferences, or conventions; and

(b) teaching or supervision; and

(c) participation in or attending case conferences, grand rounds, informal presentations, etc.; and

(d) non-educational, entertainment, or recreational meetings or activities; and

(e) committee meetings, holding of office, serving as an organizational delegate, or fulfilling editorial responsibilities (publications); and

(f) meetings for purposes of policy-making; and

(g) visiting exhibits or poster presentations; and

(h) informal self study, e.g. self selected reading, participation in a journal club, listening to audio tapes; and

(i) published research.

(6) Report Requirements:

(a) reports shall be submitted on forms available from the Board. The Board shall routinely distribute its continuing education report forms with the biennial renewal notice. By signing the biennial report of continuing education, the licensee signifies that the report is true and accurate; and

(b) licensees shall retain original corroborating documentation of their continuing education courses and official transcripts of college course work with passing grade of C or better for no less than three (3) years from the beginning date of the licensure period.

(7) Audit of continuing competency:

(a) each licensee shall be responsible for maintaining sufficient records in a format determined by the Board; and

(b) these records shall be subject to a random audit by the Board to assure compliance with this section; and

(c) the Board may audit a percentage of the continuing education reports.

(8) In the event of denial, in whole or part, of credit for continuing education activity, the licensee shall have the right to request a hearing in accordance with the Administrative Procedures Act.

ARTICLE 5

FEES

101-08. Fees.

(A) Fees are as follows:

(1) Application fee $120.00

(2) Biennial license renewal

(a) physical therapist $100.00

(b) physical therapist assistant $90.00

(3) Late Renewal Processing Fee $150.00

(4) Deactivation $50.00

(5) Reactivation (inactive to active) $150.00 + renewal fee

(6) Reinstatement (lapsed to active) $300.00 + renewal fee

(B) A check which is presented to the Board as payment for a fee which the Board is permitted to charge under this chapter and which is returned unpaid may be cause for denial of a license or for imposing a sanction authorized under this chapter or Section 40-1-50(G).

(C) The Board may direct applicants to pay an examination fee directly to a third party who has contracted to administer the examination.

(D) Fees are nonrefundable and may be prorated in order to comply with a biennial schedule.

ARTICLE 6

STANDARDS OF PRACTICE

101-09. Supervision Guidelines.

It is recommended that a physical therapist should not concurrently supervise more than three (3) full-time equivalent physical therapist assistant positions. The Board, in its discretion, may permit supervision of more than three (3) full-time equivalent physical therapist assistant positions, for a short, defined period of time, if a situation arises in a physical therapy treatment setting that makes compliance impossible. Relief from this supervision ratio is allowable if there is no immediate risk to public health or safety as determined by the Board.

101-10. Use of Aides in the Practice of Physical Therapy.

Aides are non-licensed personnel who assist the physical therapist or physical therapist assistant but whose duties do not require an understanding of physical therapy or formal training in anatomical, biological, or physical sciences. Education or training of the physical therapy aide shall not exceed the scope of activities described in Section 40-45-290. Aides are not to be assigned duties that may be performed only by a licensed physical therapist or licensed physical therapist assistant. When aides are utilized in the treatment of patients, the following guidelines shall apply:

(1) when applying hydrotherapy, heat or cold treatments, a physical therapist or physical therapist assistant may allow an aide to assist patients in dressing and undressing, drape and position the patient in preparation for treatment, clean and fill the whirlpool, attend the patient during treatment, wrap the patient's extremities after a paraffin bath, and place the hot packs on the patient; and

(2) when applying electrotherapy, a physical therapist or physical therapist assistant may allow an aide to prepare the area to be treated and to prepare equipment and apply electrodes as specified by the physical therapist and physical therapist assistant; and

(3) when applying traction, a physical therapist or physical therapist assistant may allow an aide to prepare the patient for treatment, position the patient, and apply the cervical or pelvic harness; and

(4) when applying therapeutic exercise, a physical therapist or physical therapist assistant may allow an aide to set up the patient's exercise equipment, prepare the equipment, and give the patient established amount of weights for resistive exercise; and

(5) when applying gait training, a physical therapist or physical therapist assistant may allow an aide to prepare equipment such as crutches, walkers, parallel bars, and braces and to assist the physical therapist or physical therapist assistant in gait training of the patient.

**Fiscal Impact Statement:**

There will be no cost incurred by the State or any of its political subdivisions.

**Statement of Rationale:**

These regulations are updated in conformance with the current Physical Therapy Practice Act.