Alabama Board of Physical Therapy Newsletter

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ONLINE RENEWAL 2010

The online renewal process will be available online from August 1, 2010, through November 1, 2010. **Licenses will expire at midnight on September 30, 2010**. BUT, if you're not treating patients, there is a **"grace" period** during which you can still renew October 1 through November 1 without having to pay a "late fee". The key words are: **IF YOU'RE NOT TREATING PATIENTS**. We cannot over-stress the fact that if you treat a patient after your license has expired, prior to getting it renewed, you will have a HUGE fine to pay, and your name will be listed on the website, and it will be reported to HIPDB. The Board is serious about this issue of licensees treating patients with an expired license. The fine can be as much as $1,000 per patient treated with an expired license. **And your employer will be notified.**

If you are audited, you will be notified at the end of your online process, which tells you that you have 10 working days to fax or mail in proof of your CE that you have posted on the renewal form. **Please do not send in the original certificate**; you need to keep that for future reference; we only need a copy. If audited, we will not send you the renewed license until we receive proof of your continuing education.

Check your license card for the date of your expiration. It may be that you will not need to renew for 2010. If you were licensed from January 1, 2010, to date, your license will not expire until 2011. If you were licensed by exam, you will not be required to have continuing education for your first renewal.

NO APPROVAL FOR CE COURSES AUGUST 1 – NOVEMBER 1, 2010

Due to the overload in this office during the renewal period, the Board has mandated that no courses for continuing education be reviewed or approved during that time. The list of pre-approved on-sight and on-line / home study courses is available on our website under Continuing Education. Please go ahead and renew your license and don't wait until the last minute to get it accomplished

THE HISTORY OF HOUSE BILL 393

The Alabama Board of Physical Therapy deliberated many sessions during the summer and fall of 2009 on amending the language of Section 34-24-192 of the Code of Alabama 1975, relating to the Board of Physical Therapy and to further provide for the membership. House Bill 393 and its companion bill SB320 were filed as companion bills for the 2010 Legislative Session with Representative Gipson and Senator Mitchell as sponsors. HB393 was first read on the floor of the House on January 21, 2010 and was referred to the Committee on Boards and Commissions where it received a favorable report. It was read for the 2nd time and placed on the calendar on February 17, 2010. On March 11, 2010, it was read for the third time and passed to the Senate where it was read on that date for the first time and referred to the Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs. It was read for the second time on March 30, 2010 and placed on the calendar. On April 22, 2010, it was read for the third time to pass the Second House, was enrolled, received Clerk of the House Certification, and delivered to the Governor at 3:20 p.m. It was assigned Act No. 2010-703 on April 29, 2010 and is law today! Senate Bill 320 made it to the second house, as well, and received favorable report from the Boards and Commissions Committee; but it was never placed on the calendar, as HB393 was forging ahead.

Andy Gustafson, Board Chair, and Ron Bass, Consumer Member, worked tirelessly contacting their legislators and doing the ground work necessary to get the bills submitted. The Chair and Executive Director for the Board spent quite a lot of time in the State House during the Session, attending the House and Senate Committee meetings when the bills were on the calendar and monitoring the Senate and House when they were in Session each week.

The photograph was taken with Senator Mitchell and his Assistant, Joanne Schrantz, Andy Gustafson, Board Chair, and Ron Bass, Consumer Member, as Governor Riley signed the bill into law.

RULE CHANGE REGARDING UTILIZATION OF AIDES

The Physical Therapy Board deliberated at several meetings during this year about the role of the unlicensed person who assists the Physical Therapist and the Physical Therapist Assistant in the delivery of physical therapy treatment. The consensus was that there was a need for more specific guidelines that clearly stated those activities an unlicensed person, an aide, could perform under the direct supervision of the licensed person. What emerged from these meetings was a rule change, which reflected compromise on the part of all the Board members. This rule change was submitted for certification of adoption on April 20, 2010, and became effective on June 4, 2010.

This rule has the same significance as LAW. The essence of the changes includes:

1. The aide may perform activities that do not require clinical decision making of the PT or PTA.
2. The aide may perform tasks with the following restrictions:
    a. The licensed person must reassess the patient at the beginning of each treatment session.
    b. If modalities are to be provided, the PT or PTA must designate the exact location and all parameters to be used.
    c. The aide may NOT perform ANY hands-on treatment.
    d. When exercise is provided, the licensed person must be in direct line of sight.
    e. An aide may perform restorative care on patients discharged from physical therapy.

This is only a summary of the rule change. For the exact wording, please refer to Rule 700-X-3-.03(3)(c).

HOT TOPICS BUTTON ON THE WEBSITE

Push the "HOT TOPICS" button on the homepage
and see what "HOT" items are up for discussion on the board agenda.

PHYSICAL THERAPY AND THE OASIS

Due to pressures to increase quality and cost effectiveness, the delivery of healthcare is changing in many ways in America. These changes can affect the role of the Physical Therapist and their responsibilities in this delivery system. At the same time, the professional education of Physical Therapists has changed to an entry level doctoral degree with training in medical screening and differential diagnoses. It is important that Physical Therapists do not overstep their training, competency, and legal authority as their roles and responsibilities evolve in the ever changing landscape of healthcare delivery. The Alabama Board of Physical Therapy has been notified that in home health it is becoming more common for the Physical Therapist (instead of a nurse) to do the initial admission visit to the home health agency. As part of this type of visit, the therapist is asked to do a screening of all the bodies systems and a drug regimen review. As a result of several communications requesting guidance from the Board in this area, the following Declaratory Ruling was adopted during the Board's June 3rd meeting:

Physical Therapists may participate in and/or perform patient drug regimen reviews in the home health setting and perform documentation of the drug regimen review. It is the ruling of the Board that it is acceptable for a Physical Therapist to perform these actions in the home health setting. It is incumbent upon the Physical Therapist to be aware of the limits of his/her knowledge, to respect these limitations, and to not go beyond his/her working knowledge in drawing conclusions regarding drug interactions or assigning causality. The Physical Therapist must ensure that the documentation created provides an accurate record of what was performed by the Physical Therapist.

Reference:
Administrative Code Section 700-X-3-.03(3)(a)12
Administrative Code Section 700-X-3-.02(2)(m)
Administrative Code Section 700-X-3-.02(2)(q)

PLEASE KEEP YOUR ADDRESS CURRENT WITH THE ALABAMA BOARD OF PHYSICAL THERAPY.