

**GEORGIA STATE BOARD OF PHYSICAL THERAPY**  
**Rules Committee Minutes**  
**Teleconference Meeting**  
**November 3, 2015 - 08:30AM**

**Board Members Present**

Dorothy Gaskin, PT, Committee Chair  
Reid Lawson, PT, Board Member  
Monty Strickland, PT, Board Member  
Stefanie Palma, PT Board President

**Administrative Staff Present**

Adrienne Price, Executive Director  
Kathy Osier, Licensing Supervisor  
Tamara Elliott, Board Support Specialist

**Attorney General's Office**

No Attorney Present

**Visitors Present**

No visitors present

**Call to Order:** Ms. Gaskin established that a quorum was present and called the meeting to order at 8:31a.m.

**OPEN SESSION**

**Discussion Topic: Dry Needling**

The Committee determined that based on the fact that dry needling is specifically addressed within the Georgia Physical Therapy Act, it is a matter of public protection to identify and maintain a record of licensees who are actively engaging in the practice and meet the minimum requirements to safely perform dry needling in this state. The Committee further determined that the physical therapist is responsible for remaining competent in dry needling practices and as a result, did not feel it was necessary for the Board to require continuing education specific to the practice of dry needling from those who engage in the practice.

The Committee recommends that the Board accepts the Dry Needling Approval Application as presented and vote to post Board Rule 490-9-.05 as amended:

**490-9-.05 Dry Needling.**

(A) It shall be unprofessional and unethical conduct for a physical therapist to perform the technique of dry needling without Board approval.

(B) Dry needling must be directly performed by a licensed physical therapist that is specifically trained and competent by virtue of education and training to perform dry needling. **Online study for dry needling instruction is not considered appropriate training.**

~~(a)~~(C) Effective September 1, 20122016, physical therapists must meet the following requirements in order to be approved by the Board to perform dry needling: a physical therapist must submit a complete 'Application for Approval to Perform Dry Needling' along with the applicable fee, proof of education in the OSHA Blood Borne Pathogens Standard and at least one of the following:

- (1) Graduation from an entry-level physical therapy program that included dry needling instruction consisting of a minimum of 50 hours total and competency assessment and achievement in its curriculum; or
- (2) Graduation from a post-graduate credentialed residency or fellowship program of study that included dry needling instruction consisting of a minimum of 50 hours total and competency assessment and achievement in its curriculum; or
- (3) Documented successful completion of a didactic dry needling course of study consisting of a minimum of 50 hours total and a competency assessment ~~and~~ of achievement in its curriculum.

(4) A licensed physical therapist who has successfully completed a minimum of 20 hours of specialized coursework in dry needling may utilize the skills learned in the completed coursework for a period not to exceed twelve (12) months provided that:

(i) The physical therapist completes the remaining coursework to total 50 hours within twelve (12) months of having achieved 20 hours of specialized coursework; and,

(ii) The physical therapist's practice is strictly limited to skills and body areas studied in the completed coursework.

(iii) If the physical therapist does not complete all 50 hours within twelve (12) months of having achieved the initial 20 hours of specialized coursework, he or she must cease the practice of dry needling.

(D) Upon satisfying the application requirements and being granted approval by the Board to perform dry needling, the applicant will be notified and the dry needling designation will be placed on the license.

~~(B)(E)~~ Provided, however, that physical therapists who have at least two years of experience in the clinical practice of dry needling as of September 1, ~~2012~~ 2016, have until the end of the current biennium on December 31, 2013~~2017~~, to submit a complete application and meet the requirements in subsection ~~(a)(1)-(3)~~(C)(1)-(4), in order to be granted approval to perform dry needling and receive the designation on the license.

**Cite as Ga. Comp. R. & Regs. R. 490-9-.05**

**Authority:** O.C.G.A. Secs. 43-1-19, 43-1-24, 43-1-25, 43-33-3, 43-33-10, 43-33-11 and 43-33-18.

**History.** Original Rule entitled "Dry Needling" adopted. F. Mar. 21, 2012; eff. Apr. 10, 2012.

Mr. Strickland left the meeting at 9:11 a.m.

### Miscellaneous

#### **1) Volunteerism Clarification**

The Committee recommends that the Board votes to post Board Rule 490-4-.02 as amended.

#### **490-4-.02. Continuing Competence Requirements**

The Georgia State Board of Physical Therapy requires each licensed physical therapist and physical therapist assistant to participate in a minimum number of thirty (30) clock hours of experience per licensure period to promote continuing competence. The Board recommends the requirements for competence as planned learning experiences which have content beyond the licensee's present level of knowledge and competence which may be subject to audit by the board. Content of the experience must relate to patient care in physical therapy whether the subject is research, treatment, documentation, education, management, or some other content area. The purpose of this requirement is to assist in assuring safe and effective practices in the provision of physical therapy services to the citizens of Georgia. In the event that a licensee does not meet this requirement, the license will not be renewed.

The thirty (30) hours of continuing competence requirements per biennium shall include a minimum of four (4) contact hours specifically in ethics and jurisprudence as defined in the Georgia Physical Therapy Act or by passage of the Georgia Jurisprudence Examination. Passage of the examination is equivalent to the four (4) hour requirement.

(1) The following programs may be considered for approval, but are not limited to:

(a) Programs approved by the American Physical Therapy Association and its affiliate components; or

(b) Programs approved by the Physical Therapy Association of Georgia or any other state chapters; or

(c) Programs approved by the Federation of State boards of Physical Therapy (Procort); or

(d) Programs provided at CAPTE-Accredited colleges and universities with programs in physical therapy when the continuing competency course is held under the auspices of the school of physical therapy; or

(e) Programs offered by similar professional organizations offering experiences that meet the guidelines set forth in paragraph one.

(f) Fifteen (15) hours for undergoing a peer review; or

(g) Ten (10) hours for conducting a peer review when that activity is an adjunct responsibility and not the primary employment; or

(h) Participation as a presenter for continuing education courses, workshops, seminars or symposia which have been approved by the approved list above; Continuing competence credit is based on contact hours and may not exceed 10 hours per topic;

(i) Authorship of a presented scientific poster, scientific platform presentation or published article; Continuing competence credit is 10 hours per even and may not exceed 20 hours;

(j) Teaching a physical therapist or physical therapist assistant credit course when that teaching is an adjunct responsibility and not the primary employment; Continuing competence credit is based on contact hours not to exceed 20 hours;

(k) Certification of clinical specialization by the American Board of Physical therapy Specialties. Continuing competence credit is 30 hours and is recognized only in the biennium in which certification or recertification is awarded.

(l) Self - instruction from reading professional literature; Continuing competence credit is limited to a maximum of three (3) hours; or

(m) Attendance at a scientific poster session, lecture, panel, symposium or university course Continuing competence credit is one hour per contact hour of activity; or

(n) Acting as a clinical education instructor for an accredited physical therapist or physical therapist assistant educational program; Continuing competence credit is one (1) hour per eight (8) contact hours with a maximum credit of 10 hours; or

(o) Acting as a clinical instructor or an intern for a formal, nonacademic, advanced clinical internship or as a mentor or a learner for a formal, nonacademic mentorship with a maximum credit of 10 hours.

(p) Donating time in the role of a Physical Therapist or Physical Therapist Assistant, within the scope of practice, to a charity event [or volunteer clinic](#); Continuing competence credit is one (1) hour per eight (8) contact hours, limited to a maximum of ~~five~~ [three \(3\)](#) hours;

(q) Reference Policy 13

(r) Post professional physical therapist educational programs that award academic credit are counted as one (1) university credit hour equaling ten (10) continuing competence hours. For example, a two (2) credit hour course in which a passing grade is achieved would equal twenty (20) continuing competence hours.

(2) Unacceptable activities for continuing competence include, but are not limited to:

(a) Orientation and in-service programs;

(b) Meetings for purposes of policy decisions;

(c) Non-educational meeting at annual association, chapter or organization meetings;

(d) Entertainment or recreational meeting or activities;

(e) Committee meetings, holdings of offices, serving as an organization delegate;

(f) Visiting exhibits;

(g) CPR.

(3) Continuing competence requirements shall apply within the first biennium that a physical therapist/physical therapist assistant is licensed in Georgia. However, licensees who have graduated during the current renewal

biennium and who have passed the National Physical Therapy Examination are exempt from the continuing competence requirement during the biennium in which they have graduated and successfully passed the exam.

(4) Beginning the January 1, 2014 through December 31, 2016 biennium and thereafter, persons licensed to practice as a physical therapist or a physical therapy assistant or who shall file an application to practice as such in this state are to maintain a record of completed continuing education courses and experiences by registering with an online recording and reporting system approved by the Board.

(a) For the purposes of this requirement, the Georgia State Board of Physical Therapy adopts the utilization of aPTitude offered by the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy (FSBPT).

(b) Licensees and applicants shall incur no additional costs from the FSBPT for this service.

(c) Every licensee or applicant subject to the rules of the Georgia State Board of Physical Therapy shall be deemed to have given such person's consent to the Board and its representatives to access their continuing competence record retained within the online database for the purposes of auditing and verifying completion of the Board's continuing competency requirements. Such person waives all objections to the admissibility of the record in any proceedings or hearings before the board.

(5) Individuals licensed during the last six (6) months of a biennium renewal period will not be required to meet continuing competence requirements for that biennium.

(6) Individuals who have been reinstated within the last six (6) months of a biennium renewal period may use the continuing competence coursework used for reinstatement, thereby making them exempt from the requirement for that biennium renewal period.

(7) Those licensees selected for audit shall submit the Verification of Continuing Competence form and documentation of compliance upon receipt of notice. Acceptable documentation shall include:

(a) An official program or outline of the course attended or taught or a copy of the publication which clearly shows that the objectives and content were related to patient care in physical therapy and shows the number of contact hours, as appropriate. The information also should clearly identify the licensee's responsibility in teaching or authorship; and

(b) A certificate or verification of completion of home study which identifies the sponsoring entity or maintain a copy of the final grade report in the case of a University credit course(s), or specialization certificate, or proof of attendance with a copy of the program for the other acceptable activities, or documentation of self-instruction or reading professional literature; or

(c) Verification of a peer review of practice with verification of acceptable practice by a recognized entity. An example of a recognized entity is the American Physical Therapy Association Board Policy (See APTA Policy G03-05-15-40).

(8) Responsibilities of the Licensee:

(a) To maintain the documents identified in number (4) above for no less than three (3) years from the beginning date of the licensure period. These records should be maintained in the licensee's personal files for no less than three (3) years from the beginning date of the licensure period through the even numbered year after the license is renewed.

(b) To submit a properly completed and notarized "Verification of Competence Education" form to the Georgia State Board of Physical Therapy, if audited.

(c) To complete all steps necessary to meet the re-licensure requirements on or before December 31st of the odd numbered years.

- (d) To provide the Board with information requested during an audit.
- (e) To keep a current mailing address on file with the Licensing Board Office at all times.

Cite as Ga. Comp. R. & Regs. r. 490-4-.02

Authority: O.C.G.A. §§43-1-24, 43-1-25, 43-33-10, 43-33-11 and 43-33-16.

History. Original Rule entitled "Revocation, Refusal to Renew" was filed and effective on June 30, 1965.

Amended: Rule repealed and a new Rule of the same title adopted. Filed April 20, 1973; effective May 10, 1973.

Amended: Rule repealed and a new Rule entitled "Disciplinary Sanctions" adopted. Filed December 15, 1982; effective January 4, 1983.

Amended: Rule repealed and a new Rule of the same title adopted. Filed February 4, 1985; effective February 24, 1985.

Amended: Filed February 28, 1986; effective March 20, 1986.

Amended: Rule renumbered as Rule 490-4-.03 and a new Rule entitled "Continuing Education Requirements" adopted. Filed January 28, 1987; effective February 17, 1987.

Amended: Filed June 26, 1987; effective July 16, 1987.

Repealed: New Rule of same title adopted. F. Mar. 22, 1989; eff. Apr. 11, 1989.

Amended: F. Aug. 24, 1989; eff. Sept. 13, 1989.

Repealed: New Rule of same title adopted. F. Jul. 22, 1999; eff. Aug. 11, 1999.

Amended: F. May 9, 2000; eff. May 29, 2000.

Amended: F. May 19, 2004; eff. June 8, 2004.

Repealed: New Rule of same title adopted. F. June 22, 2007; eff. July 12, 2007.

Repealed: New Rule of the same title adopted. F. May 12, 2010; eff. June 1, 2010.

Amended: F. May 17, 2011; eff. June 6, 2011.

Repealed: New Rule of same title adopted. F. May 25, 2012; eff. Jun. 14, 2012.

Amended: F. May 23, 2013; eff. Jun. 12, 2013.

Amended: F. Jan. 16, 2015; eff. Feb. 5, 2015.

## 2) Discussion – BR 490-2-.09. Licensure: Endorsement

The Committee recommends that that the Board votes to post Board Rule 490-2-.09 as amended.

### Rule 490-2-.09. Licensure: Endorsement/Reciprocity

(1) The Board may, in its discretion register a physical therapist or physical therapist assistant without an examination as set forth in Official Code of Georgia Annotated Section 43-33-15 upon payment of applicable fees. (Refer to fee schedule)

(2) Any applicant applying for licensure pursuant to O.C.G.A. 43-33-15 and who is a graduate of a physical therapy or physical therapist assistant program accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE) and approved by the Board, must provide:

(a) verification of an active license in good standing from another state board~~a list of all states where the applicant holds an active license~~; and<sub>1</sub>

(b) a verification of licensure in good standing from the state board of all states in which the applicant has held a license to actively practiced; and<sub>2</sub>

(c) verification of active practice in the two years immediately preceding the date of ~~this~~ application; and<sub>3</sub>

(~~ed~~) official transcript from the institution granting the entry level degree in physical therapy or physical therapist assistant indicating the date of graduation; and<sub>4</sub>

(~~de~~) scores from the national licensing examination.

(3) Any applicant applying for licensure pursuant to O.C.G.A. 43-33-15 who is a graduate of a physical therapy or physical therapist assistant program not accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE) or approved by the Board, must provide:

(a) ~~verification of an active license in good standing from another state board~~~~a list of all states where the applicant holds an active license;~~ and,

(b) ~~a~~ verification of licensure in good standing from the state board of all states in which the applicant has ~~held a license to~~ actively practiced; and,

(c) ~~verification of active practice~~ in the two years immediately preceding the date of this application; and,

(~~e~~d) official evaluation and transcript from a credential evaluation organization approved by the State of Georgia; and

(~~e~~) scores from the national licensing examination.

(4) ~~Proper proof of licensure in good standing from the state(s) where the applicant practiced in the two years immediately preceding this application;~~ ~~p~~Proof of graduation from an accredited physical therapy or physical therapist assistant program or credential evaluations deemed substantially equivalent to the professional degree, and satisfactory completion of the licensing examination shall be deemed to be prima facie evidence of compliance with Code Section 43-33-15. The Board, however, may request further verification of any credential submitted if deemed necessary to evaluate the application.

Cite as Ga. Comp. R. & Regs. r. 490-2-.09

Authority: O.C.G.A. Sec. 43-33-15.

History. Original Rule entitled "Examination Proctors" adopted. F. and eff. June 30, 1965.

Repealed: F. May 1, 1973; eff. May 21, 1973.

Amended: New Rule entitled "Licensure: Endorsement" adopted. F. June 27, 1995; eff. July 17, 1995.

**Adjournment** With no additional business to be discussed, the meeting was adjourned at 9:17a.m.

**Minutes recorded by:**

Tamara Elliott, Board Support Specialist

**Minutes reviewed and edited by:**

Kathy Osier, Licensing Supervisor and Adrienne Price, Executive Director

**Minutes approved on:**

November 17, 2015

DOROTHY GASKIN  
**COMMITTEE CHAIR**

ADRIENNE PRICE  
**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**