

POSITION STATEMENT ON DRY NEEDLING

The American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) notified each agency/board responsible for licensing occupational therapists (OTs) and occupational therapy assistants (OTAs) of their intent to propose an Adjunctive & Preparatory Techniques policy asserting that dry needling is an adjunctive and preparatory technique. The policy further stipulates that adjunctive and preparatory techniques, to include but not limited to dry needling, can be utilized by OTs and OTAs who possess the advanced training or certification to do so and who operate in accordance with local and state policies, rules, and regulations.

As a result of AOTA's proposed policy, the increase in courses offering dry needling certification to OTs and OTAs, and the national conversation surrounding the practice of dry needling by licensed OTs and OTAs, the Georgia State Board of Occupational Therapy has noted a substantial increase in the number of inquiries involving the legalities of the practice of dry needling by Georgia licensed occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants. In response, the Board requested counsel to conduct a review of the laws governing the practice of occupational therapy and other professions within the State of Georgia to determine if any statutory authority exists to allow the practice of dry needling by the persons licensed under the Georgia Occupational Therapy Practice Act.

After careful consideration of the statutory review, it has been determined that dry needling is not statutorily authorized in the Occupational Therapy Practice Act and is therefore not within the scope of occupational therapy within the State of Georgia. A legislative change to the Occupational Therapy Practice Act would be necessary to permit the practice of dry needling by OTs and OTAs in this state.

The Georgia State Board of Occupational Therapy is not eligible to present a Bill to the Georgia General Assembly for consideration; however, the Board may consider any amendments proposed by other persons as well as any public comments relative to the proposals and release a position statement if warranted. The Board will distribute a copy of this statement to AOTA and Georgia Occupational Therapy Association (GOTA) and post a copy on the Board website for the public to review.

Members of the public who are interested in identifying whether a Bill has been proposed to the legislature to amend the Occupational Therapy Practice Act are encouraged to visit the Georgia General Assembly website at <https://www.legis.ga.gov/search> to conduct a search using the keywords feature.