



OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE COMMISSION

Bill Analysis

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H.B. 131

132nd General Assembly
(As Introduced)

Reps. Gavarone and Reineke, Blessing, Lepore-Hagan

BILL SUMMARY

- Includes in the practice of physical therapy the evaluation of a person to determine (1) a diagnosis to treat physical impairments, functional limitations, and physical disabilities, (2) a prognosis, and (3) a plan of therapeutic intervention.
 - Permits a physical therapist to order tests, including diagnostic imaging and studies, but requires that the tests be performed and interpreted by other licensed health care professionals.
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CONTENT AND OPERATION

Physical therapy scope of practice

The bill modifies the activities that may be performed by a physical therapist as described in the physical therapist licensing law.¹ Currently, the practice of physical therapy is described generally as the evaluation and treatment of a person by physical measures and the use of therapeutic exercises and rehabilitative procedures, with or without assistive devices, for the purpose of preventing, correcting, or alleviating any disability.

Purpose relative to treating disability

The bill revises the existing description of the purpose of physical therapy, which is to prevent, correct, or alleviate any disability. The bill specifies that this purpose

¹ R.C. 4755.40 to 4755.56.

applies with respect to physical impairments, functional limitations, and physical disabilities (as opposed to any disability, as provided in current law).²

Patient evaluation

The bill specifies that physical therapy includes the evaluation of a person to determine all of the following:

- (1) A diagnosis to treat a person's physical impairments, functional limitations, and physical disabilities;
- (2) A prognosis;
- (3) A plan of therapeutic intervention.³

These provisions regarding determinations made by a physical therapist replace an existing provision specifying that physical therapy does not include the medical diagnosis of a patient's disability.

Ordering tests

The bill allows a physical therapist to order tests, including diagnostic imaging and studies. The tests, however, must be performed and interpreted by other licensed health care professionals.⁴

Physical measures

The bill specifies that the physical measures a physical therapist may use include not only massage, as provided in current law, but also other manual therapy techniques. The other physical measures included in the practice of physical therapy under current law are heat, cold, air, light, water, electricity (except as discussed below), sound, and the performance of tests of neuromuscular function as an aid to treatment.⁵

² R.C. 4755.40(A)(1).

³ R.C. 4755.40(A)(1).

⁴ R.C. 4755.40(A)(1).

⁵ R.C. 4755.40(A)(2).

Retained exclusions and limitations

The following activities are currently excluded from the practice of physical therapy and remain expressly excluded under the bill, including under the bill's revisions regarding the use of physical measures:⁶

- (1) The use of Roentgen rays (X-rays) or radium for diagnostic or therapeutic purposes;
- (2) The use of electricity for cauterization or other surgical purposes.

The bill retains a provision specifying that physical therapy includes activities involving assistive devices, such as wheelchairs, prosthetics, and orthotics, but only if the activities are performed by a person who is adequately trained. The bill removes this limitation from certain other activities that current law identifies as being part of the practice of physical therapy. This does not alter the requirement to be licensed as a physical therapist to perform these activities.⁷

HISTORY

ACTION	DATE
Introduced	03-16-17

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⁶ R.C. 4755.40(A)(3).

⁷ R.C. 4755.48 and 4755.99, not in the bill.

