**Two proposed dry needling bills in 2020 Florida Legislature**

FSOMA has offered legislators and the Florida Physical Therapy Association (FPTA) the following definition of dry needling. It has been rejected by the FPTA. FSOMA is committed to working with all legislators to determine an accurate and concise statutory definition for dry needling.

Dry needling is an advanced needling skill or procedure specific for treatment of myofascial pain using a sterile single-use filiform needle inserted into the skin or underlying tissues that is manually manipulated to stimulate a trigger point followed by direct removal. Dry needling does not include management of more than one inserted needle at a time.

This year the Florida Physical Therapy Association and profession has a gained the support of Representative Cyndi Stevenson, Senator Ben Albritton and Senator Gayle Harrell to sponsor a bill in the Florida House and Senate that makes changes to the Physical Therapy Practice Act.

Included in these bills is a pathway for Florida physical therapists to perform dry needling (trigger point acupuncture) effective in 2020. The House bill, if passed as is, directly empowers the Board of Physical Therapy Practice to establish or modify minimum standards of practice for PT, including dry needling. The Senate bill was recently amended and includes a working definition of dry needling and some limited criteria for minimum standards of practice.

FSOMA prefers the Senate version at this time, because the association believes a statutory definition of dry needling will provide greater assurances and clarity to the public, professions and regulators. Clearly defining dry needling is necessary for determining the amount of clinical training and supervision required of physical therapists or other providers interested in performing dry needling.

Developing an accurate statutory definition and training standards for dry needling at this time will also provide reliable guidance for future legislators and healthcare regulators when considering expanding other healthcare practice scopes to include this invasive medical procedure.

FSOMA has offered the FPTA and bills’ sponsors several working definitions for dry needling and discussed minimum standards of practice at length. To date, FSOMA’s input and dialog have not resulted in agreement among the stakeholders. Currently, the parties are at an impasse regarding the definition of dry needling, resulting in more confusion and less consensus on the training and minimum standards of practice.

The more expansive the dry needling definition remains, then the greater the training requirements must be. Physical therapists insist that dry needling is a limited procedure used for a specific purpose, yet their definition fails to describe or identify any limitations for dry needling. FSOMA is working with legislators to establish a definition that properly delineates dry needling from the whole of acupuncture.

Without inclusion of language that precisely defines the dry needling procedure in statute, FSOMA must oppose HB 467 and the current amended version of SB 792.

**Please contact your local Florida House Representative and Senator to voice your concern over absence of a dry needling definition in HB 467 and the vague and expansive definition for dry needling in SB 792. Create your own message or use the suggested language below.**

Include the date

Dear Senator name:

SB 792 (amended) - Physical Therapy by Senator Albritton may be heard during committee meetings in the coming weeks. I am writing to you today as a Licensed Acupuncturist with concerns and would ask that you TABLE or OPPOSE the legislation in its present condition.

As currently drafted (amended), the bill provides a vague and expanded definition for “dry needling.” Dry needling is invasive Trigger Point Acupuncture.  It is important that the legislature consider how this procedure is defined and to address patient safety concerns by articulating meaningful standards, definitions, and protections in the legislation.

The amendment filed by Senator Albritton, while we appreciate his efforts to include minimum standards, does not go far enough or address one of our main concerns - the definition of "dry needling". The definition in the amendment will allow physical therapists to perform acupuncture procedures beyond the scope of that intended with dry needling and for which, PTs do NOT have the requisite education or training to do.

Please consider amending HB 467 to include this concise dry needling definition:

Dry needling is an advanced needling skill or procedure specific for treatment of myofascial pain using a sterile single-use filiform needle inserted into the skin or underlying tissues that is manually manipulated to stimulate a trigger point followed by direct removal. Dry needling does not include management of more than one inserted needle at a time.

It is imperative that an accurate definition for dry needling be adopted: one that delineates physical therapists performing dry needling/trigger point acupuncture from performing other more involved invasive acupuncture procedures.  More importantly, the definition and training standards adopted in statute should reflect the specific procedure PTs are requesting permission to perform and for which they submit requires additional training.

Sincerely your constituent,

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Your Name

Address

Include the date

Dear Representative name:

HB 467 - Physical Therapy by Representative Stevenson may be heard during committee meetings in the coming weeks. I am writing to you today as a Licensed Acupuncturist with concerns and would ask that you TABLE or OPPOSE the legislation in its present condition.

As currently drafted, the bill would permit the Board of Physical Therapy to promulgate rules relating to "dry needling".  Dry needling is invasive Trigger Point Acupuncture.  It is important that the legislature consider how this procedure is defined and to address patient safety concerns by articulating meaningful standards, definitions, and protections in the legislation.

Please consider amending HB 467 to include this concise dry needling definition:

Dry needling is an advanced needling skill or procedure specific for treatment of myofascial pain using a sterile single-use filiform needle inserted into the skin or underlying tissues that is manually manipulated to stimulate a trigger point followed by direct removal. Dry needling does not include management of more than one inserted needle at a time.

It is imperative that an accurate definition for dry needling be adopted: one that delineates physical therapists performing dry needling/trigger point acupuncture from performing other more involved invasive acupuncture procedures.  More importantly, the definition and training standards adopted in statute should reflect the specific procedure PTs are requesting permission to perform and for which, they submit requires additional training.

Sincerely your constituent,

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Your Name

Address