

Position Statement – North Carolina Board of Physical Therapy Examiners

6. Performance of Non-Physical Therapy Medical Procedures Requested by Physicians in Various Healthcare Settings (Formerly: Performance of Finger Blood Specimens)

Adopted – December 28, 2001

Updated – December 6, 2006

Reviewed by the Board – September 23, 2010, June 17, 2015

Updated- June 6, 2018

Updated – June 8, 2022

Physical therapy licensees are often asked to perform medical procedures related to a patient's overall care that are not within the definition of physical therapy, nor are they presumed to be precluded by the practice acts of other health care disciplines. Examples would include, but are not limited to, assessment of bowel sounds, PT/INR, suture and staple removal, urine specimens, pulse oximetry, and finger sticks.

In most cases, the interpretation of the results of such procedures should be left to the healthcare professional directing that such activities be performed on the patient.

The performance of these procedures is not considered part of the scope of practice for physical therapy; however, it would not be a violation of the **North Carolina Physical Therapy Practice Act** for a physical therapist (PT) or physical therapist assistant (PTA) to perform these medical procedures with a physician's order provided that the PT or PTA has been properly trained and is competent, and makes it clear to the patient that this procedure is not physical therapy. The PT or PTA should communicate the results to the appropriate health professional so the health professional can interpret and communicate the results to the physician to make any necessary modifications to the patient's treatment plan.

In addition, the physical therapy licensee cannot bill for his or her time as physical therapy. Lastly, the NCBPTE cannot speak for other Boards as to whether the performance of these medical procedures would violate other health care practitioners' practice acts. The NCBPTE can only say that it is not a violation of the **North Carolina Physical Therapy Practice Act**.

Kathy Arney, PT, MA, Executive Director

NC Board of Physical Therapy Examiners

8300 Health Park Suite 233

Raleigh, NC 27615

Phone: 1-919-490-6393 / 800-800-8982

Fax: 1-919-490-5106

Email: karney@ncptboard.org

Web: www.ncptboard.org