

Alabama Board of Physical Therapy Newsletter

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Are You Interested in serving on the Alabama Board of Physical Therapy?

The Alabama Board of Physical Therapy (ALBPT) provides the vital function of ensuring the public's safety as they benefit from physical therapy services throughout the state of Alabama. Serving on the board is a great opportunity for therapy professionals to ensure the continued integrity and safety of physical therapy practice.

A quick look through the website will reveal the term end dates for each of the current board members and the district they represent. Once you have identified your eligibility, you can reach out to the ALBPT and determine the nomination period for that specific seat.

Being nominated to the ALBPT is much easier than you think. One little known fact is that you can nominate YOURSELF! That's correct! If you have an interest in serving, please reach out to the Board directly. If you know a qualified candidate that is interested in serving, you are able to nominate that individual, as well. Once all nominations are collected, the final list will be sent to the governor to make the final selection.

Should you have any questions, please contact us at glenn.davis@pt.alabama.gov

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

It was once said that “Man’s feelings are always purest and most glowing in the hour of meeting and of farewell” (author unknown to me). I wish to express heartfelt appreciation for the selfless service of our recently departed consumer board member Mary Jolly. Mary’s unique perspective proved invaluable to the decisions our board made about the impact of physical therapy on our consumers. She worked tirelessly to assure that we kept the best interest of the public and transparency of our communication a priority in all our actions.

It has been a pleasure serving as chair due to the support and professionalism shown by all of our board members and staff. Were it not for unswerving cooperation and dedication of my fine colleagues we would not have been able successfully address continuing education, license renewal and numerous other important concerns this year.

You may rest assured that your board representatives are dedicated to the mission that they were appointed to serve.

Wiley Christian, PT

Board Chair

Please keep your mailing address and email address
updated with the
Alabama Board of Physical Therapy



I would like to take this opportunity to say that I have been honored to serve on the board for the past 7 years. I have witnessed many challenges and changes that the board has faced. Hopefully, these changes have ensured the great people of the State of Alabama are experiencing good quality of care from our physical therapist and physical therapist assistants.

As the times change so does the practice of physical therapy. There are certain rights and quality that consumers of our services expect and deserve. We, the board, attempt to ensure that the services are offered in a manner that exemplifies the upmost quality of care possible while also being offered with honesty, integrity and in a manner that enhances the quality of life for the people of our state.

The privileges that have been bestowed upon me are not taken lightly. I attempt wholeheartedly to make decisions, such as assisting in changing our law to include an Impaired Practitioner Program for our licensees to get the help that they need, to ensure that the people of Alabama get the best care possible delivered to them. Other major changes include our continuing education rules that allow the licensees to use their professional judgement to choose the course to build upon the knowledge that they already have.

I appreciate the opportunity that has been given to me to serve the people of our state. It has and is very rewarding to serve with the great group of people now serving on our board. Our chair, Wiley Christian, is steering our board on a path that better enables the board to serve the people of our great State of Alabama.

Again, I would like to say thank you to everyone for allowing me to serve in this capacity. If you ever need anything please contact me with any concerns or questions that you may have. I am confident that the board and I will continue to make decisions that enhances the quality of care for the citizens of our state as a steward of our state.

Vince Molyneux, PTA
Board Member

CHANGES, CHANGES, CHANGES

Changes...Every time I turn around there are more changes! Why can't we just leave well enough alone? I HATE CHANGES!!! I know many of you feel this way and, quite frankly, so do I at times. While I dream of finding that happy median where no changes are required I realize that happy median does not exist. I also realize the path we must travel when determining what changes are needed or required is often long, winding, and seemingly endless. Several changes, not all of which have been popular, have been made during the past two years and there are more changes on the horizon.

The path the board took to revamping and improving the continuing education rules proved to be unpopular at times as well as long, winding, and seemingly endless. When I assumed the position of Executive Director in April 2013 the board was already well involved in addressing continuing education due to a threatened lawsuit concerning the course approval process. After two years of dogged determination and several attempts to identify the proper process the board appointed a task force to address the situation. Nine months later the current continuing education rules were filed and became effective June 19, 2015. While the changes to the continuing education rules are significant I believe the end result is a major improvement which can stand the test of time.

Efforts are now underway to streamline several services provided by the board's staff. In the very near future applicants and licensees will be able to request license verifications to other jurisdictions, complete name change/license reprint requests, purchase licensee rosters, and file applications for initial licensure online. Payment of the associated fees for these services can be made with a credit card which will include, as with online renewals, a small "convenience" charge collected by the provider for each transaction. Our goal is to greatly reduce the time frame for completing these services while maintaining the quality expected by all.

As we strive to become more effective and efficient in our operations we plan to utilize available technology to the fullest extent possible. Your suggestions and input on ways to better serve you are valued while your patience as we make these changes will be greatly appreciated. As always, the board's staff is here for you as a source of information, guidance, and assistance. Please do not hesitate to contact us with your questions, concerns, suggestions, and input.

Finally, I would like to thank each and every licensee for their complaints, input, and patience as the board worked through all the changes during the past two years. It was your complaints and input that lead the board to make changes and your patience that allowed them the time needed to fully review, research, and develop the final product.

Sincerely,

Glenn A. Davis
Executive Director

Wellness Program

The Alabama Board of Physical Therapy's Wellness Program, a program to promote the early identification, intervention, treatment, and rehabilitation of physical therapy licensees who may be impaired by reason of illness, inebriation, excessive use of drugs, narcotics, alcohol, chemicals, or other substances, or as a result of any physical or mental condition, is functioning as it was designed to. A major goal of the program is to have licensees in need of help self-refer to the program; a goal which has had early success.

Currently there are six licensees participating in the program (two as a direct result of Dr. Garver's presentation at the Association's Annual Spring conference) with five (5) of those participants self-referred. The sixth participant, who was steered to the program by the board's Violations Committee, reported their situation to the board after reading a Newsletter article notifying licensees the license renewal application had been modified to include a question concerning impairment. Although it is unfortunate these individuals have an impairment problem, these results indicate the program is both working and necessary. Dr. Garver, the Wellness Program Director, has stated this is an exceptional record and a good indication that the program is succeeding.

It is important for both licensees and the public to be aware the program exists as well as how the program works. As everyone becomes more knowledgeable about the program and understand its purpose, they will be able to share that knowledge, when needed, with individuals who might benefit from it. Additionally, a better understanding of the program might lead someone to volunteer to serve as a mentor to those who are participants in the program. The program currently has nine mentors but is constantly searching for additional volunteers to serve. Each individual in the program has a mentor who work with them exclusively. As the program grows and there are more enrollees, there will be a need for additional mentors. Please consider helping your colleagues in the physical therapy profession and volunteer to be a mentor. Mentors work directly with Dr. Garver with their identity known only to him and the program participant they are mentoring. If interested, you may contact Dr. Garver at:

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The Physical Therapy Board will have a booth at the Alabama Chapter's Fall Conference to be held at Ross Bridge in Birmingham on August 14-15, 2015. Please feel free to come by and learn more about the Wellness Program and/or being a mentor.

Jay H. Segal, P.T.
Board Liaison to the Wellness Committee

Practical Implementation Guidelines for the New Continuing Education Rule

As of June 19, 2015, the Board of PT adopted a new rule that dramatically change the process of continuing education. While this new rule brings a welcome increase in professional responsibility, the overall process can be a bit intimidating for this first renewal cycle. Common questions received at the Board office includes, “Will this specific course meet the guidelines?” or “What if I take a course that doesn’t meet the guidelines...will I lose my license?” Several people have commented that the new process seems too easy and want to know, “What’s the catch?” In response to these queries, the following checklist is provided to help licensees and course providers confidently navigate the new rule.

When considering a course offering or (or preparing to offer a course, if you are a provider), ask yourself the following questions.

1. Will this course maintain, improve or expand physical therapy skills or knowledge?
2. Does this course have a dated meeting agenda that outlines the course activities, including goals and objectives? (In the case of an online or other non-traditional course or activity, does the agenda outline expected time to be spent on specific activities, progression expectations and deadlines for completion?)
3. Does the course advertising describe the source of the physical therapy information, i.e., scientific or practice-based evidences, case studies, etc.?
4. Is the course instructor(s) qualified to teach the course, having education, special training or experience with the content to be presented?
5. Does the course advertising describe the target audience or describe prerequisite levels of participant experience?
6. Is the course/activity at least 50 minutes in length?

If you answer ‘yes’ to each of the questions above, you are considering (or offering) a course that will meet the new rules. If you answered ‘no’ to any of the questions, you need to find another course or course providers would need to address those deficits before offering the course/activity.

Once you have completed a course, two additional factors will need to be considered. First, what evidence do you have of course/activity completion? Traditionally you walk away from a course with a certificate of completion or some other document that verifies successful completion. However, if you are attending a large event with multiple concurrent sessions that does not provide some form of certificate or other automated documentation, you would need to have the instructor or a conference official sign or stamp the session description in the conference program as verification of attendance. The second factor to consider is how will you prove each of the six questions above in the event of an audit? For example, if you attended the recent Wallace State – Hanceville 2015 Alumni Connection Event, you could have completed a course named, “Put Me in Coach, I’m Ready to Play”. Catchy name, looks good on a certificate with a baseball diamond background, but is it a physical therapy continuing education course or part of baseball spring training? This course was, in fact, a physical therapy clinical educator training course but without the course brochure or printout of the website advertising, the completion certificate alone would not validate that fact. For this simple reason it is necessary to keep both the completion certificate AND the brochure or other course advertising to substantiate how any given course/activity meets each of the continuing education guidelines. The new continuing education rules requires that each licensee begins this year to build a five year record of continuing education certificates and other documentation that supports how a course/activity meets the guidelines. (continued on page 7)

Licensees should be very careful of course or activity that advertising the claims that the course has been “Approved by the Alabama Board of PT” or “Meets the Guidelines of the Alabama Board of PT”. In regards to the first statement, the Alabama Board of PT no longer approves any courses or providers. As for the second statement, a course may indeed ‘meet the guidelines’ but only you, using your professional judgment, can determine if that course/activity ACTUALLY accomplishes that claim.

The new rule has also opened the continuing education process to activities beyond the traditional conference or online course. This includes academic coursework, clinical residencies or fellowships, specialty certification or advanced recognition, peer-reviewed publishing, guest lecturing, and formal external peer-review of practice. To a lesser extent (not to exceed forty percentage of the annual requirement) credit is also recognized for abstract/scientific or book review publications, publication of a clinical practice guideline, authoring a platform or poster presentation, acting as a clinical instructor, and developing alternative media materials. The new categories are listed, with the credit values awarded to each, in the new rule and should be read carefully.

The other major change to continuing education is in regards to the Alabama physical therapy jurisprudence expectation. Both PTs and PTAs will now complete a jurisprudence course / activity every fifth year, starting with 2020. When you consider the potential of carry-over hours, the next time a jurisprudence course will need to be completed for licensure renewal will be in 2019 (with those hours carried over to the 2020 renewal cycle) or actually completed during the 2020 compliance period. While the jurisprudence expectation now occurs less frequently it does not negate the individual responsibility to stay apprised of statutory changes or the published expectations found within the current Practice Act and Administrative Code.

Finally, the Board acknowledges that occasionally mistakes can occur. In the event of an audit that finds a licensee has completed a course or activity that does not meet the guidelines, time is permitted to correct this mistake. The new rule allows for sixty (60) days to rectify the continuing education deficit without disciplinary action.

The Board of PT is proud of the new rule, and hopeful that this change will be a continuing education format that can stand the test of time. The appointed Task Force diligently surveyed the nation, reading multiple continuing education rules to integrate best practice ideas into this new rule and were confident that their proposal was progressive, professional and a positive change. Licensees are encouraged to read the new rules, rather than just relying on a single-page synopsis document or a newsletter article. Ultimately continuing education is not just whether an activity meets the guidelines or not. While this is important for licensure renewal, the larger issue is this....does your continuing education activities have a positive impact on your practice?

Alina Adams, PT

Disciplinary Actions

Case #: 15-06-06

Allegation: Abandonment of Patients, Conduct Unbecoming

Disposition: License Suspended 4/13/15 Pending Communication from Licensee

Approved: April 11, 2015

Name: Rebecca Seymour, PT

Case #: 15-06-07

Allegation: Conduct Unbecoming;

Disposition: License Suspended 4/13/15 Pending Communication from Licensee

Approved: April 11, 2015

Name: Ronald Bady II, PTA



Regular Board Meetings

August 14, 2015 (Ross Bridge, Birmingham, AL)

September 24, 2015 (Board Office)

November 19, 2015 (Board Office)

We invite you to join us, our board meetings are open to the public.