

FSBPT Implements Fixed-Date Licensure Testing for PT’s

Due to breaches of security in 2010 and cheating on the NPTE (national physical therapy examination) by sharing test items, the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy suspended testing for graduates of PT programs in four countries – India, Egypt, Pakistan and the Philippines. FSBPT made testing available to graduates from these countries only once a year. The test is called the NPTE-i.

In November, 2010, a lawsuit was initiated by three plaintiffs educated in the Philippines against the Georgia State Board of Physical Therapy and the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy, charging that special testing restrictions should not be imposed upon them. In February, 2011 the Superior Court of Fulton County, State of Georgia entered a judgment for the plaintiffs stating that the Georgia State PT Board exceeded the Board’s statutory authority because it imposed non-uniform examination requirements on otherwise qualified candidates based solely on the country in which they received their physical therapy training. The court declared the testing prohibition invalid and unenforceable in Georgia and entered a permanent injunction. FSBPT is now in compliance with this ruling, and after May 25, 2011, there will no longer be an NPTE-i.

“The impact of the Georgia ruling,” states the FSBPT, “threatens our ability to fulfill our mission to comply with testing standards and provide a valid reliable examination.” As a result, FSBPT will implement fixed date testing for all candidates, regardless of country of education, which means that candidates educated in the United States will be limited to fixed date testing

Random Audits and Inspections

The Board has finalized its plans to conduct audits and inspections. Facilities will be chosen randomly. Plans call for implementation in April, 2011.

Some of the things that the inspector will be looking for include display of licensure certificates, license ID card availability, ratio of PTAs to PTs, proper support personnel utilization and other items.

All violations will be reported to the Board, and affected licensees will be notified by letter.

Screening by a PTA

A frequently asked question fielded by the Board staff members is whether a physical therapist assistant can perform screens. Section 1-3(8) of the Regulations states that a physical therapist assistant may not perform evaluations/screens.

Board has defined patient/client screens as processes used to determine the potential need for physical therapy. Therefore, a screen is considered an evaluative function. It is the position of the Board that a screening of a patient for physical therapy services is not an activity which can be legally performed by a PTA.

as well as foreign graduates. Continuous testing will remain available until June 30, 2011. For the remainder of 2011, test dates will be on September 7, October 26 and December 5. FSBPT states that the three fixed dates will provide enough seats for all candidates. However, first choice locations may not be available, and travel may be required.

For 2012, five testing dates will be fixed, but the dates have not yet been chosen. Students, physical therapy educational programs and others are being surveyed on possible dates. In addition, FSBPT is working with Prometric to determine the best dates for accommodating candidate volume and to secure seats for potential PT applicants.

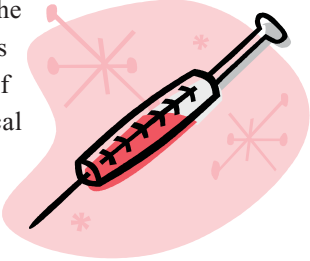
The ruling against the Georgia Physical Therapy Board will have an effect on Mississippi and all states. Because of the elimination of continuous testing by FSBPT, exam candidates in all states will have limited access to the examination, and can test only on the fixed dates. This causes a potential delay in licensure and employment after graduation. Additionally, candidates who are not successful on the first test attempt must wait even longer for a re-take. FSBPT states that it will continue to research options that meet the long-term needs of the NPTE program. As a part of the planning, there will be a meeting in July of “stakeholders” to make plans for 2013 and beyond.

Please note that at this time fixed-date testing applies only to PT exam candidates, and not to PTA exam candidates. PTA exam testing will remain continuous for the time being.

Finger Stick and Lab Draw

Physical therapists who work in home health care settings have occasionally asked if a physical therapist can perform finger stick blood sugar or lab draw during a home care visit. After review of the statute, the Board determined that this would not be in violation of the Mississippi Physical Therapy Practice Act provided the physical therapist or physical therapist assistant has had adequate training and is competent. The home health agency must have documentation of this training on file for each physical therapist who does this activity.

The Board stresses that because finger stick is not part of the physical therapy scope of practice, the patient must be informed that it is not a physical therapy procedure. Furthermore, the physical therapy practitioner cannot bill for this procedure as physical therapy.



Change of Home Address, Worksite or Name

It is the responsibility of licensees to provide the Board with written notification of address changes (home or work) no later than 30 days after such change is effective according to Section 3-8. For a name change, a notarized copy of the legal document must accompany the request. Failure to keep your address or name change current will result in a \$25.00 fee for the cost of resending any correspondence or materials.

NAME	LICENSE #	
OLD NAME		
OLD ADDRESS (City, State, Zip)	COUNTY	
NEW ADDRESS (City, State, Zip)	COUNTY	
PHONE NUMBER	EMAIL ADDRESS	
PRIMARY EMPLOYER	ADDRESS (City, State, Zip)	PHONE NUMBER

Mail this form to the Mississippi Board of Physical Therapy, P.O. Box 55707, Jackson, MS 39296-5707 or fax to (601) 939-5246.

Mississippi State Board of Physical Therapy
Post Office Box 55707
Jackson, MS 39296-5707





MISSISSIPPI STATE BOARD OF PHYSICAL THERAPY



Newsletter

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- A Word from the Chair

The Role of the Board

With the impending change in the way the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy (FSBPT) exam is scheduled for new graduates, it is appropriate to comment on the role of the state licensure board. Another article in this newsletter describes the rationale behind the changes and some of the many challenging implications for all of the physical therapy stakeholders (patients, graduates, employers, etc.). With this sudden change many practitioners and other stakeholders need to reconsider the reason licensure boards and professional associations exist and how they address various aspects of physical therapy practice. A short discussion of the Mississippi State Board of Physical Therapy can provide some helpful information.

In discussing the Mississippi State Board of Physical Therapy (the Board) one must answer several questions. What is the role of the State Board? Who does the Board represent? What are the activities and powers of the Board? How does the Board function?

The role of licensure boards is to protect the public welfare and safety while improving quality. It does not represent the profession, licensees or programs that educate physical therapy practitioners. The physical therapy association and its components are the advocates for the profession. The Board is the advocate for the public who may benefit from physical therapy.

The Board establishes the rules and regulations in accordance with the Physical Therapy Practice Act which identify the minimum standards for practice in the state. When questions arise regarding the scope of practice or what services a practitioner may legally provide the Board issues an interpretation with the advice from legal counsel.

Practitioners who meet the practice standards are issued a license. When complaints are received about practitioners and an investigation occurs and in those cases which evidence is found of non compliance with the law, the Board determines disciplinary action.

The Board addresses new regulatory issues such as continuing competence, background checks, jurisprudence knowledge, ways of monitoring practice and changing educational requirements to fulfill the consumer protection role mandated by the State through the Practice Act. Board actions relate not only to current question but often are connected to upcoming changes within our ever evolving healthcare system and society.

The Board is self-supporting and receives no general fund tax appropriations. It is funded solely through fees collected from its licensees.

The Board meets quarterly at the Board office to discuss issues and make decisions regarding physical therapy practice in Mississippi. Other times there are called meetings for hearings to consider complaints. Between meetings our Board administrator, investigator and license registration agent manage the communications, licensure processes and office.

The Board and staff strive through all of their actions to serve the public interest.

Neva F. Greenwald, PT

Important Reminders

- ◆ All licensees must take two-hours of board-approved programs in ethics/professional responsibility as part of their total CE requirement each licensure period.
- ◆ Address changes must be submitted on the change of address form located on the Board's website no later than thirty (30) days after such change is effective. The Board may assess a licensee a fee of \$25.00 for failure to notify the Board of address change.
- ◆ You should always verify that a course is approved on the Board's website if you plan to submit it for continuing education credit.
- ◆ Failing to report to the Board any unprofessional, incompetent or illegal acts that appear to be in violation of this law or any rules established by the Board is a violation for which a licensed physical therapist or physical therapist assistant may be disciplined.
- ◆ Requests to change names on licensure files must be accompanied by a certified legal document which attests the change (marriage license, etc.)
- ◆ The Board and its staff cannot answer questions about Medicare/Medicaid reimbursement requirements or codes. You will need to contact the Medicare/Medicaid office.

Board News

Sadly, in June we will say farewell to Marcia Kidder, the only physical therapist member to serve from the 1st Congressional District since the independent regulatory Board was established in 2002. She was initially appointed to the Board by Governor Haley Barbour in 2004 and will complete her present term June 30, 2011. Marcia has been serving as the Board secretary for the past 4 years. The Board and staff thank Marcia for all of her contributions and commitment to promoting safe and effective physical therapy practices during her service to the Board. Her knowledge of practice, fiscal management, and timely, probing questions about issues confronting the Board have been invaluable during discussions and decision making. Our best wishes to her for future endeavors.

Governor Haley Barbour has announced a new appointment to the Mississippi State Board of Physical Therapy. Shannon R. Singletary is a physical therapist from Oxford who will be representing the 1st Congressional District. He is a 1997 graduate of the University Mississippi Medical Center and is currently employed by the University of Mississippi – Athletic Department as the Senior Associate Athletic Director - Sports Medicine/Strength and Conditioning. Shannon's term begins July 1, 2011 and ends June 30, 2015. The Board and staff welcome the new appointee.

Governor Haley Barbour has re-appointed SuAnn Poole as the physical therapist assistant representative. She is currently employed by King's Daughters Therapy Center, in Brookhaven. She is a graduate of Pearl River Community College and has been licensed as a physical therapist assistant since May 19, 1998. Her term begins July 1, 2011 and ends June 30, 2015. The Board and staff look forward to her continued contributions and commitment to public safety and maintaining physical therapy practice standards.

Complaints & Disciplinary Actions in 2010

Complaints received:

Physical Therapists – 3
Physical Therapist Assistants – 4

Disposition of complaints:

4 closed – no action/violation
1 closed – no jurisdiction
2 pending

Disciplinary Actions:

1 PT consent order
3 PTA consent orders
1 PTA license revoked

A T T E N T I O N

Look what's available on our website at www.msbpt.state.ms.us. Please visit the website frequently for updated information.

You can find:

- Verification of License – check to see if someone is licensed
- Practice Act and Rules and Regulations
- Continuing Education – approved courses are available for review
- Current Board members
- Links to APTA, MPTA, FSBPT and more
- How to file a complaint
- Scheduled Board meetings
- List of current disciplinary actions
- Information on how to get a course approved
- Application packet
- Licensure renewal information
- Name/Address change forms and many more

New Licensees

The Board is pleased to welcome 30 new licensees to the physical therapy community in Mississippi. These licenses have been issued since the Fall 2010 newsletter. Welcome to the physical therapy practitioner community in Mississippi!!!!

Physical Therapists

Beckwith, Deanna P.
Buchholz, Eric R.
Buchholz, Lila T.
Burnaman, Lea M.
Denson, James E.
Haverkamp, Joe D.
Haverkamp, Kristen E.
Jolito, Clydelle M.
Lacanlale, Jennifer T.
Lancaster, Kimberly D.
Lockard, Ricky M.
Lyons, Joseph A.
McCarty, Audrey L.
Newsome III, John T.
Rathbauer, Tiffany F.
Roberts, Katherine S.
Vetter, Jannell W.

Physical Therapist Assistants

Buster, Sara E.
Cady, Sean F.
Caldwell, Heather R.
Castle, Margaret A.
Clark, Jennifer
Ervin, Raquel A.
Fields, Bridgette N.
Foose, Curran D.
Jones, Jansen P.
Kelley, Kelsey M.
Parnell, Teena M.
Rose, Kacee L.
Rillera, Julia M.

Important Licensure Renewal Reminders

The Board suggests that you to keep the following information in mind when renewing your license:

Address Changes: Have you moved or had a change in employment? Did you notify the Board office in writing of the change? The Board will mail notices, approximately sixty (60) days prior to the end of the licensure period. This means the renewal application will be mailed around May 1, 2011 to the last home address on file with the Board. Please notify the Board immediately by fax, email or mail if you have recently moved, changed employment or forgot to notify the Board of this change. Refer to Section 3.8 of the regulations.

Completion of renewal application: Please complete the renewal application in its entirety. Verify that you have answered every question, including updating any changes to your personal and professional addresses and telephone numbers and that you have listed all CEU's completed on the back on the application. The entire address should be included on the form (name, address, city, state, zip and telephone number). The information requested is pertinent for your licensure file. Forms that are missing **ONE** piece of information will be returned as incomplete and may result in a lapsed license if the form is not completed in its entirety prior to the expiration date.

Renewal Fee: The renewal fee is \$150.00 for physical therapist and \$125.00 for physical therapist assistants. Check or money order should be made payable to Mississippi State Board of Physical Therapy (MSBPT).

Continuing Education: Appropriate documentation of CE credits should be listed on the back of the renewal application and copies of course completion should be submitted with the renewal form. Please refer to Section 7-2 (4) of the regulations for information on licensees who have not yet received proof of

course completion (90-proof).

Change of name: If you are requesting a change of name, a copy of a legal documentation must accompany the name change request. Legal documents consist of a copy of your marriage license, divorce decree, social security card or driver's license.

Be on Time: It is in your best interest to submit the renewal application prior to June 30, 2011 to avoid late and reinstatement fees. Renewal applications completed in their entirety and not returned by the Board for completion should have their new identification card and licensure seal before the end of licensure period. The Board staff cannot guarantee applications received after June 13, 2011 will be processed in time for licensees to receive confirmation of renewal in the mail prior to June 30, 2011. **Remember... employers should not let you work until your new renewal licensure information has been received.**

Verify receipt of renewal: It is strongly recommended by the Board staff that you send the renewal application by certified or priority mail which requires return receipt.

Failure to renew before the deadline: A licensee who does not file, with the Board, all requirements for renewal before the end of the licensure period will be deemed to have allowed his/her license to lapse. Then individuals will be required to pay the late fee in addition to the renewal fee. Failure to submit all renewal requirements postmarked on or before September 30 shall result in the necessity of the payment of a reinstatement fee in addition to the late fee and renewal fee. Refer to Section 6-3 of the regulations. Remember...you may not practice as a physical therapist or as a physical therapist assistant until your license has been reinstated. Practicing with a lapsed license could result in disciplinary action by the Board.

Word from the Board Administrator

Incomplete License Renewal Applications

Shortly, licensees whose licenses expire on 6/30/2011 will receive their license renewal packet in the mail. An instruction sheet is included with the renewal application. PLEASE READ THE INSTRUCTION SHEET CAREFULLY. Each renewal year license renewal applications are returned to the licensee because required information is omitted. This causes a delay in receipt of the renewed license, and could possibly result in a license expiring if the information is not received in the Board's office before June 30.

Following are some examples of why an application may be returned to you for completion:

1. Failure to give complete address in both personal and employment fields – name, street address or P.O. Box, city, state, county and zip code.
2. Failure to give personal and employment telephone numbers.
3. Failure to answer the renewal questions.
4. Failure to sign and date the application signature line.
5. Failure to check the appropriate box and sign and date the authorization to release information section.
6. Failure to list every CE course on the back side of the renewal form. Courses must be listed and the number of hours credited must be filled in. The office staff does not keep copies of your course certificates after they verify the information on the certificates. The information in the CE section of the renewal form is the only permanent record kept of your CE credits.

The Board apologizes for any inconvenience caused by a delay in receiving your renewed license because an application had to be returned. The reality is that it is the licensee's responsibility to ensure the accuracy of the information. With renewal applications coming in by the hundreds each day, the Board's staff does not have the time to research and find the missing information and still get the renewed license returned to you in an expeditious manner. Therefore, the Board implores you to be diligent when filling out your renewal application. Review the application carefully before mailing.

Stephanie J. Boyette

Continuing Education Approvals

One of the most frequently asked questions that the Board's staff receives is whether a specific continuing education course has been approved. The Board has stated in past newsletters that all courses submitted for approval are listed on the Board's website. This is a sure source of approved courses. Section VII of the Regulations defines the legal requirements:

Courses given or approved by the physical therapy board of any of the fifty states when the content relates to the profession of physical therapy are automatically pre-approved. Courses given or approved by the American Physical Therapy Association, the Mississippi Physical Therapy Association or any other state's Physical Therapy Association are also pre-approved. Likewise accepted sources are the American Medical Association and accredited universities when the course content applies to the practice of physical therapy.

Continuing education courses given or approved by Athletic Trainer Boards or Associations, Occupational Therapy Boards or Associations or by any other allied health professions **are not** a source of automatically approved courses. Another frequent misconception is Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation courses. CPR is not an approved course even though your employer may require certification. Continuing education provided by your

employer for employees only is not acceptable either. Unless you are taking a course for your own personal gain, you should always verify that the course is approved by an acceptable entity before paying for it. Unapproved courses submitted with the license renewal application will not be accepted for CE credit, and could cause your CE requirement to fall short.

If you wish to take a course that will be submitted for continuing education credit, and you cannot verify that it has been approved by any entity defined in the Regulations, your employer, the course sponsor or you may submit a course outline, timed agenda and a short biography of the qualifications of the courses instructors to the Board for review and consideration. A course review fee of \$50.00 is required. If the course is approved, it will be listed on the Board's website.

Continuing education credits must be accrued during your current licensure period and submitted with the license renewal application at the time of license renewal. Course certificates should never be mailed to the Board's office at any other time unless you have been specifically instructed to do so.

Finally, please remember that all licensees are required to accrue a minimum of two (2) hours of approved credits in ethics as part of the total CE requirement each licensure period. Notice that the ethics credits are a part of the twenty-four hour requirement, not in addition to the twenty-four hours.