

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 5465

As Reported by House Committee On:
Health Care & Wellness

Title: An act relating to exemptions from licensure as a physical therapist.

Brief Description: Concerning exemptions from licensure as a physical therapist.

Sponsors: Senators Dammeier, Schlicher, Becker, Keiser and McAuliffe.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Health Care & Wellness: 3/26/13, 3/28/13 [DPA].

Brief Summary of Bill
(As Amended by Committee)

- Allows a person in a physical therapy assistant education program to be supervised by a licensed physical therapist assistant.
- Limits the number of physical therapy or physical therapy assistant students a physical therapist may supervise.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE & WELLNESS

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 17 members: Representatives Cody, Chair; Jinkins, Vice Chair; Schmick, Ranking Minority Member; Hope, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Angel, Clibborn, Green, Harris, Manweller, Moeller, Morrell, Riccelli, Rodne, Ross, Short, Tharinger and Van De Wege.

Staff: Jim Morishima (786-7191).

Background:

Physical therapy is based on movement science and includes a variety of functions and services such as:

- examining, evaluating, and testing individuals with health and movement-related conditions to determine a diagnosis, prognosis, plan of therapeutic intervention, and to assess and document the ongoing effects of intervention;

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- alleviating impairments and functional limitations in movement;
- training for, and the evaluation of, the function of a patient wearing an orthosis or prosthesis;
- performing certain wound care services;
- reducing the risk of injury, impairment, functional limitation, and disability related to movement; and
- engaging in administration, consultation, education, and research.

A physical therapist may supervise no more than two assistive personnel at any one time.

Generally, people need to be licensed as a physical therapist or a physical therapist assistant in order to practice physical therapy. However, a person does not need to be licensed as a physical therapist assistant if he or she is pursuing a course of study leading to a degree as a physical therapist assistant in an approved professional educational program and is satisfying supervised clinical education requirements related to his or her physical therapist assistant education while under the direct supervision of a licensed physical therapist.

Summary of Amended Bill:

A person satisfying supervised clinical education requirements related to a course of study leading to a degree as a physical therapist assistant may be supervised by a licensed physical therapist assistant (in addition to a licensed physical therapist). In addition to the two assistive personnel a physical therapist may supervise, he or she may also supervise no more than two persons in a physical therapy or physical therapy assistant education program.

Amended Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The amended bill prohibits a physical therapist from assisting more than two persons in a physical therapy or physical therapy assistant education program.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Amended Bill: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This is a simple bill making a much-needed correction. When the state licensed physical therapy assistants, it only allowed physical therapists to supervise physical therapy assistant students. This bill will open up more internships, which will help address provider shortages. If this bill were amended to limit the number of students a physical therapist may

supervise, it should be clarified that this limit does not include the two assistive personnel a physical therapist may supervise under current law.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Senator Dammeier, prime sponsor; and Elaine Armantrout, Physical Therapy Association of Washington.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.