

# Kansas Orthopaedic Society, Inc.

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To: Committee on Public Health and Welfare

From: Bradley C. Daily, MD  
President of Kansas Orthopaedic Society

Date: 1/24/13

Subject: SB 46: concerning physical therapists

The Kansas Orthopaedic Society would like to submit the following comments on SB 46 concerning the proposed change in the scope of practice of physical therapists (PTø) in the state. The proposed changes in SB 46 would allow PTø to diagnose and treat patients without a physician referral. Current statutes require a physician or licensed health care practitioner referral for a new diagnosis and does allow direct access to PTø without referral for up to 30 days for the same condition treated in the past year by a physical therapist.

We feel the current statute, most recently amended in the 2007 legislative session; serve the state healthcare system and our mutual patients well. The current collaborative environment between orthopaedists and PTø provides for comprehensive, safe, and high quality patient care. There is no doubt that physical therapy services and other therapy professionals improve patient outcomes from injury and post-surgical recovery in our patients when coordinated by the licensed healthcare practitioner. If SB 46 is passed it would cause overlap in diagnosis and treatment between physicians and PTø. This resulting "competition" for patients can already be seen between physicians and chiropractors where little collaboration of care is seen on an individual patient. This is unfortunate in that the optimal outcome might be reached if the professions worked in tandem rather than the adversarial nature that is often present.

We feel that physicians have the most in depth and comprehensive knowledge and training in medical diagnosis and are most suited for directing patient care for utilization of services and optimal outcomes. SB 46 will further fragment the healthcare delivery model in the state at a time when there is increasing national support for the patient-centered medical home (PCMH) delivery system. In this system coordinated health care is directed by the patientø physician to increase efficiency, decrease redundant cost, and improve patient outcomes and satisfaction.

The American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) lists Kansas as a direct access state with the current 2007 statute in place. A minority of states allow the kind of direct access proposed in SB 46 despite a national push by the APTA for their Vision 2020 plan that would make PTø the "*practitioners of choice to whom consumers have direct access for the diagnosis of,*

*interventions for, and prevention of impairments, activity limitations, participation restrictions, and environmental barriers related to movement, function, and health.”*

We cannot support SB 46. The Kansas Orthopaedic Society feels that the current statute for physical therapy is most consistent with the coordinated model for health care that the country is moving towards. The team approach that PTø and orthopaedic surgeons currently use should be the model for other professionals in healthcare and SB 46 will only serve to destabilize this relationship. Thank you for reviewing our comments.