

Oregon Physical Therapist Licensing Board
2.18.14 Board Updated Statement Relevant to
Physical Therapists using the Intervention of Dry Needling

On January 23, 2014 the Court of Appeals Appellate Commissioners held the opinion that dry needling is not within the scope of practice of chiropractic medicine and the recently adopted rule (OAR 811-015-0036) exceeded the scope of the Chiropractic Board's statutory authority and is invalid.

At its February 18, 2014 Special Meeting the Oregon Physical Therapist Licensing Board discussed the Appellate Courts findings and has determined the Appellate Courts opinion is not applicable to the practice of physical therapy.

The primary accountability of the Oregon Physical Therapist Licensing Board is public protection, rather than promotion of the profession. The Board has established professional standards of practice which help assure that physical therapists and physical therapist assistants are properly educated, hold valid/current licenses, practice within their scope of practice and continue to receive ongoing continuing competency training.

The Oregon Physical Therapist Licensing Board still holds to its original opinion that dry needling of trigger points is likely within the physical therapist scope of practice (excluding PTAs). Further, the Board acknowledges that dry needling of trigger points is an advanced intervention requiring post graduate training and education. In the interest of public safety, until a measure of evidence based training and education can be determined, the Board strongly advises its licensee to not perform dry needling of trigger points. The Board, in partnership with the Oregon Physical Therapy Association, will continue to monitor National trends and legislation regarding this issue.