



American Physical Therapy Association of Maryland

DATE: Tuesday, February 18, 2020

BILL: House Bill 576 – Health Occupations – Athletic Training - Revisions

COMMITTEES: House Health and Government Operations Committee
The Honorable Shane Pendergrass, Chairwoman

POSITION: Support only with amendments

On behalf of the American Physical Therapy Association of Maryland (APTA MD) we submit the following testimony raising our concerns with House Bill 576 as drafted and strongly urge the Committee's favorable adoption of amendment language jointly supported by the Maryland Occupational Therapists Association (MOTA) and the Maryland Chiropractic Association (MCA). With these amendments we can support HB576.

As Drafted House Bill 576: *“(1) alters the definition of “practice athletic training”; (2) repeals limitations on the settings in which athletic trainers may practice; (3) repeals the requirement that an evaluation and treatment protocol describe the settings where the athletic trainer may practice; (4) repeals obsolete language regarding the three athletic trainer members of the Athletic Trainer Advisory Committee; and (5) makes conforming and technical changes.”*

The physical therapy community is committed to ensuring that health care rendered to the public is provided by qualified health care practitioners within their scope of education and training. The Bill as introduced makes a number of substantive changes to the practice of Athletic Training in Maryland. Of specific concern we note the following:

The terms “Athlete”, “Athletic Activity” and “Athletic Injury” should not be eliminated as drafted in House Bill 576. By removing these terms, athletic trainers’ scope of practice would move beyond the patient population they are specifically licensed and accustomed to treat and expand into patient care areas beyond the athletic case-mix. This broad terminology could really apply to any living person, not just athletes.

HB 576 would expand the scope of practice of athletic training to include delivery of health care by athletic trainers to ANY individual regardless of age, disabilities, or physical or mental health conditions, in ANY setting. An athletic trainer’s educational background and clinical exposure prepare them to care for a very specific population of athletes. A broken bone is not always just a broken bone. The health care practitioner must look at the whole patient when treating an injury. A young child with cerebral palsy, an older woman with osteoporosis, or a working-age man with neurological or cardiopulmonary issues, has different treatment requirements than a conditioned athlete.

The proposed amendments retain the definitions of athlete and athletic injury, proposes expanded language to include job function and work-related injuries, and supports removing the setting limitations among other provisions.

In 2018, the National Athletic Trainers and Physical Therapy Associations signed a letter of collaboration to promote quality care across health care, including interprofessional practice and the promotion of regulations that represents the education and training of each health care profession.

The physical therapy community believes that the bill as introduced raises too many concerns. APTA Maryland is committed to work together with the Maryland Athletic Trainer Association from the amendments offered below to achieve successful resolution for all.

For additional information please contact:

Barbara Marx Brocato & Associates at 410-269-1503 or barbara@bmbassoc.com

Joint Amendments to HB 576 – Submitted by APTA, MOTA, MCA (chiropractors)

Amendment # 1: - On page 2 strike the brackets in line 7; in line 8 following "competition" strike "or" and after "game" insert "**OR TRAINING AND CONDITIONING TO PROMOTE WELLNESS AND IMPROVE JOB FUNCTION**"; in line 10 strike "(1)" and in line 11 strike the semicolon and insert a period, and strike from "and" through line 14; in line 16 remove the bracket.

Amendment # 2: - On page 3 strike all of the brackets in line 13 and 24; in line 16 strike "EXAMINATION, DIAGNOSIS"; in line 25 strike everything after "making" and replace with "**A REFERRAL FOR FURTHER EVALUATION AND TREATMENT OF AN ATHLETIC INJURY**".

Amendment # 3: - On page 4 in line 8 strike "or", and in the unnumbered line following line 2 insert the following: "**(iii) EXCEPT FOR A PROFESSIONAL ATHLETE, WORK HARDENING, TREATMENT, RECONDITIONING OR REHABILITATION OF JOB FUNCTION NECESSITATED BY WORK RELATED INJURIES; OR**", in line 9 strike "(iii)" and insert "**(iv)**"; and in line 9 and 11 strike the brackets.

Amendment # 4 – On page 6, strike the brackets in line 29 and strike (1) in line 30.

Amendment # 5 – On page 7, strike starting with "AND" in line 1 through "BOARD" in line 7.

Amendment # 6: - on page 8 strike the brackets in line 15 and strike the word "INDIVIDUAL." In line 16 strike the word "INDIVIDUAL".