

February 6, 2023

Greetings Maryland Senate Committee voting on SB232,

I am writing to you today for your help in Opposition of the expansion of Dry Needling (aka Acupuncture) being added to the scope of practice for Athletic Trainers in our state. Athletic Trainers recent petition seeking expansion in their field, notes that dry needling is necessary for them to provide the highest quality of care. Unfortunately the training required is insufficient (80-100 hours), and has potential public safety issues when performed by an unskilled practitioner. Most notably, as an invasive procedure there is the potential for pneumothorax, due to improper needle insertion. This information is absent in the current training received by Athletic trainers. Pneumothorax can lead to a collapsed lung, with the potential for necessary surgeries and even fatalities.

As an Acupuncturist in Maryland for over 20 years, we have a minimum of 3-4 years both didactic and clinical training. We also have 30 CEU credits to keep up-to-date bi-annually. It is important that we safeguard the public by ensuring that those practicing needling of any kind have the proper training and understanding of potential contraindications.

Acupuncture should be provided by licensed Acupuncturists, and dry needling is in fact Acupuncture, it is performed on Ashi points.

Acupuncture is a powerful modality for healing and wellness. It requires proper training and should not be used as an adjunct for folks in other fields. This is unsafe for the public, and creates misunderstanding and misinformation regarding the field of Chinese Medicine, which is a comprehensive system for health, that includes Acupuncture.

Please hold others to the standards we have achieved in Maryland.

Practicing Acupuncture in Maryland requires a Masters Degree in Acupuncture, a Maryland State license, mal-practice insurance, bi-yearly renewal, as well as, continued educational studies of 30 CEU's bi-annually. It is a comprehensive modality that is diluted and misused when added as an adjunct by people who are not licensed Acupuncturists, nor properly trained in the potential risks of needle insertion.

Please do not allow our field of practice, Acupuncture and Chinese Medicine, to be diluted or minimized by allowing Dry needling to be considered as "the scope of service" by unqualified practitioners in other fields.

Thank you for your time to this issue.
Sincerely,

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