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Bill Analysis
Legislative Service Commission

H.B. 121

124th General Assembly
(LSC 124 0025-2)

Reps. Williams, Olman, Barrett, Womer Benjamin, Redfern, Metzger, Jones, Brinkman, Hollister, Wolpert, Hagan

BILL SUMMARY

- Eliminates the prohibition against practicing physical therapy other than pursuant to the prescription or referral of a doctor, dentist, podiatrist, or chiropractor.
- Changes the scope of practice of physical therapists by modifying the definition of "physical therapy" in the physical therapists' licensing law.

CONTENT AND OPERATION

Changes to the practice of physical therapy

(secs. 4655.40, 4755.48, and 4755.99)

Under current law, a physical therapist may practice only pursuant to the prescription or referral of a person licensed to practice medicine or osteopathic medicine, chiropractic, dentistry, or podiatry. Violation of this provision is a second degree misdemeanor, which carries a penalty of not more than 90 days in jail, a fine of not more than \$750, or both.

The scope of practice of a physical therapist is governed by the Revised Code's definition of physical therapy in the physical therapists' licensing law. "Physical therapy" is defined as the evaluation and treatment of a person by physical measures and the use of therapeutic exercises and rehabilitative procedures, with or without assistive devices, for the purpose of preventing, correcting, or alleviating any disability. "Physical therapy" also includes various other activities and functions to aid the purpose of preventing, correcting, or alleviating any disability. The Revised Code specifically provides that "physical therapy" does not include certain activities. Among the activities not included is diagnosis of a patient's disability.

The bill eliminates the prohibition against practicing physical therapy without a prescription or referral. It also expands the scope of practice of physical therapists by including in the definition of physical therapy the assessment of a person to determine the appropriate physical therapy measures and intervention to treat the person's impairments, functional limitations, or disability, or to reduce the risk of injury or impairment to the person. The bill modifies the exclusion of the "diagnosis of a patient's disability" from the definition of "physical therapy" by providing that only "medical" diagnosis is excluded.

HISTORY

ACTION	DATE	JOURNAL ENTRY
Introduced	02-22-01	p. 176

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