

3-8-18

TO: OTACB WI Licensing Board

FROM: Connie Simon OTR/CHT

TOPIC: Requesting clarification that dry needling is within the scope of practice for Occupational Therapists in the state of Wisconsin. As the practice of Occupational Therapy continues to evolve, it is appropriate that we continue to provide techniques such as dry needling to maximize our patient's functional outcomes.

DEFINITION OF DRY NEEDLING: Dry Needling is a skilled intervention that uses a thin filiform needle to stimulate underlying myofascial trigger points, muscular, and connective tissues for the management of neuromuscular pain and movement impairments to improve the ability to perform ADL's (Activities of daily living) and IADL's (Instrumental activities of daily living). Dry Needling would not be used as a stand-alone procedure but part of a broader treatment plan in preparation for or concurrently with purposeful and occupation-based activities or interventions that enhance engagement in occupation.

Dry needling would fall under the Occupational Therapy Scope of practice within the OT Practice Act:

- OT 4.02(1) "Occupational therapy," as defined at s.448.96 (5). Stats., may include the following interventions: (a) Remediation or restitution of performance abilities that are limited due to impairment in biological, physiological, psychological or neurological processes
- OT 4.02(f) indicating that physical agent modalities based on a physician order as an adjunct to or in preparation for engagement in treatment.
- OT 4.02(r) Use of a range of specific therapeutic procedures, including wound care management, techniques to enhance sensory, perceptual, and cognitive processing; and pain management, lymphedema management and manual therapy techniques to enhance performance skills.

WOTA is endorsing that the State of Wisconsin Practice Act supports that dry needling is within the scope of practice for Occupational Therapists, provided there is documented evidence of clinical competence.

WHY THE REQUEST? Many Occupational Therapists are interested in pursuing training in dry needling as they have seen the positive effects found in the literature. Skilled/experienced therapists are definitely qualified based on their basic education of anatomy and physiology along with demonstration of continuing education and competence to perform this technique.

Thank you for your time in consideration of this issue. If you would like any further information, please feel free to contact myself or members of the WOTA Board and we will be happy to provide you with items of request.

Sincerely,

Connie L.S. Simon OTR/CHT
Hand to Shoulder Center of Wisconsin
2323 N. Casaloma Ave.
Appleton, WI 54914
Phone: (920) 730-8833