



WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF PHYSICAL THERAPY

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The West Virginia Board of Physical Therapy (WVBOPT) provides this correspondence in response to questions brought up by the West Virginia American Physical Therapy Association (WVAPTA) regarding concerns over recent programs being advertised by some of the large insurance companies to the citizens of West Virginia. The Board discussed these questions during its regularly scheduled board meeting on June 1, 2022, and have provided the following answers to those questions:

1. Does Chapter 30, Article 20, and/or the rules promulgated by the WVBOPT allow artificial intelligence (AI) to prescribe physical therapy exercises or provide feedback that could constitute as physical therapy as described in 30-20-9?

According to 30-20-9 and 30-20-1 of the WVBOPT Statute, artificial intelligence is not permitted to prescribe physical therapy exercises or provide feedback that could constitute as physical therapy.

2. Does Chapter 30, Article 20, and/or the rules promulgated by the WVBOPT allow a licensed physical therapist in West Virginia to use artificial intelligence or other technologies to examine, evaluate and test patients or clients with mechanical, physiological and developmental impairments, functional limitations, and disabilities or other health and movement related conditions in order to determine a diagnosis, prognosis and plan of treatment intervention, and to assess the ongoing effects of intervention?

According to 30-20-1 and 30-20-9, artificial intelligence is not permitted to examine, evaluate, and test patients or clients in order to determine a diagnosis, prognosis, and plan of treatment intervention, and to assess the ongoing effects of intervention. A licensed Physical Therapist in the state of WV is permitted to use artificial intelligence as a resource in combination with synchronous evaluation, treatment, and assessment.

3. Does Chapter 30, Article 20, and/or the rules promulgated by the WVBOPT allow "health coaches" who are not licensed physical therapists or physical therapist assistants to be involved in the monitoring physical therapy exercise adherence?

No. A health coach is not defined in statute or rules. Only licensed physical therapists or physical therapist assistants are permitted to practice physical therapy and monitor physical therapy exercise.

4. Does Chapter 30, Article 20, and/or the rules promulgated by the WVBOPT allow physical therapy evaluation or treatment through technology (e.g., computer, smartphone, “app”) that does not include a direct two-way audiovisual synchronous communication between the patient and Physical Therapist or Physical Therapist Assistant?

No. Asynchronous information may be reviewed as additional information by a licensed physical therapist. However, according to 16-1-12.3 a physical therapist must provide synchronous audiovisual interaction accompanied by the use of asynchronous store and forward technology.

The West Virginia Board of Physical Therapy (WVBOPT) is a state regulatory board created by the WV Legislature to regulate the practice of physical therapy in order to protect the public from the unauthorized, unqualified, and unregulated practice of physical therapy. The WVBOPT is a part of the Executive Branch of the Government which enforces laws. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us at 304-558-0367 or email at WVBOPT@wv.gov.

Sincerely,



Nonnie S. Holcomb
Executive Director