

HCS HB 410 -- PHYSICAL THERAPIST SCOPE OF PRACTICE

SPONSOR: Gregory

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Professional Registration and Licensing by a vote of 11 to 2. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules-Administrative Oversight by a vote of 9 to 0.

This bill changes the laws regarding physical therapists so that physical therapists no longer need a prescription or referral from a doctor in order to treat a patient. Instead, a physical therapist is required to refer to an approved health care provider any patient whose condition is beyond the physical therapist's scope of practice, or any patient who does not demonstrate measurable or functional improvement after 10 visits or 21 business days, whichever occurs first. The physical therapist must also consult with an approved health care provider if after 10 visits or 21 business days, whichever occurs first, the patient has demonstrated measurable or functional improvement from the physical therapy and the physical therapist believes that continuation of physical therapy is necessary. The physical therapist cannot continue to provide physical therapy until the consultation has occurred. Continued physical therapy must be in accordance with any direction of the health care provider. The physical therapist must notify the health care provider of continuing physical therapy every 30 days.

This bill is the same as HB 2090 (2018).

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that this bill cuts unnecessary time and cost for patients by allowing a patient to go directly to a physical therapist without needing a referral first. Allowing more access to physical therapy will help reduce the need for opioid medication to treat pain.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Gregory; Brett Hayes, University of Missouri Health Care; Jason Rubel, Missouri Physical Therapy Association; and Gina Wilkerson.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that patients could be at risk for further injury without a diagnosis from a doctor and that you do not want to take the physician out of the equation for managing care.

Testifying against the bill were David Jackson, Signature Medical Group; Missouri Chiropractic Physicians Association; Missouri State Medical Association; and the Missouri Association of Osteopathic Physicians And Surgeons.