

SS SB 51 -- PHYSICAL THERAPISTS

This bill modifies the laws regarding physical therapists so that physical therapists no longer need a prescription or referral from a doctor in order to evaluate and initiate treatment on a patient, as long as the physical therapist has a Doctorate of Physical Therapy Degree or has five years of clinical practice as a physical therapist. However, the bill does require a physical therapist to refer to an approved health care provider any patient whose condition is beyond the physical therapist's scope of practice. The physical therapist must also refer any patient who does not demonstrate measurable or functional improvement after 10 visits or 30 days, whichever occurs first.

The physical therapist must also consult with an approved health care provider before continuing therapy if after 10 visits or 30 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. 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 10 visits or 30 days after the initial consultation unless the consulting approved health care provider directs otherwise.