

Submitter: Jordan Karr
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3824

Dear Committee Chairs:

I am an Oregon resident and I am asking you to please support HB3824. As a healthcare consumer in the state, allowing physical therapists to perform dry needling and order diagnostic imaging and durable medical equipment, an would improve access to care, facilitate prompt diagnosis, and greatly increase their capacity to provide effective treatment.

Within the current medical landscape, if I were to see my PT for an injury and they determine I need imaging or DME like crutches, I would have to make another appointment with either my PCP, urgent care, or go to the ER (at a high cost to me). This dramatically increases the time and money I have to spend on and in the medical system, all for something that my PT is perfectly well equipped to handle. Obtaining a prescription for imaging directly from my physical therapist would save me time and money. At least 13 other states already allow physical therapists to provide this level of care and given their doctoral level training in anatomy, pathology, and differential diagnosis, it is appropriate and in-line with established practice.

Lastly, I urge you to bring Oregon in line with 46 other states and the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy to make the practice of dry needling by a certified and licensed physical therapist legal in the state for the following reasons: Dry needling has been safely practiced by physical therapists since the 1990s with extremely low adverse event rates (less than 0.1% according to multiple large-scale studies), and PT liability insurers report no increased claims related to this practice. Physical therapists receive comprehensive doctoral-level anatomical training, with the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy confirming that 88% of competencies required for safe dry needling are already included in accredited DPT curricula. Multiple Supreme Courts in other states have affirmed that dry needling is distinct from acupuncture and properly within physical therapy scope, recognizing that health professions naturally have overlapping practices that benefit patient choice. In our current healthcare climate where Oregonians struggle with access to care, allowing qualified physical therapists to perform dry needling would increase availability of this evidence-based intervention that has been incorporated into clinical practice guidelines. Dry needling specifically targets functional changes in anatomical structures using western medical principles, which is fundamentally different from acupuncture's approach based on Chinese medicine principles of meridians and energy flow. Supporting HB 3824 in its entirety ensures Oregonians have access to safe, effective

care from licensed providers while aligning our state with national best practices.

I have received dry needling from a physical therapist for treatment of chronic back pain, as well as knee pain, both of which were initially resistant to treatment in PT programs that focused primarily on teaching me exercises and stretches. Once I went to a PT who was familiar with dry needling, my condition improved substantially. I was able to increase my exercise significantly and get back to some of my favorite hobbies with less pain. As someone who has also been to acupuncture, I can tell you first hand that the experience, process, and scientific framework guiding dry needling is extremely different than those of acupuncture. Dry needling at a PTs office is clearly an effective approach to improving soft tissue functioning that is based in anatomical science, not Chinese Medicine. The only similarity I can think of is that they both involve needles.

In summary, I urge you to support HB3824 in its entirety. Oregonians deserve access to safe, effective, evidence based care by licensed providers.