

Submitter: Megan Fulton
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 urging you to support HB3824. As a healthcare consumer in the state, allowing physical therapists to order diagnostic imaging and durable medical equipment would improve access to care and facilitate prompt diagnosis.

I have Hypermobility Spectrum Disorder, a rare disease that not many healthcare providers are not familiar with. Finding a provider knowledgeable about my condition is both extremely important, and extremely difficult. My physical therapist has been instrumental in helping me manage my condition which causes daily joint and muscle pain and negatively impacts my mobility and my life.

Within the current medical landscape, if my PT were to 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). I then have to spend extra time educating my provider on my condition and its severity to convince them that the imaging or DME is necessary.

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, money, and hassle. 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.

- Dry needling is legal for PTs to perform in Washington state.

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

Thank you,
Megan Fulton