

**POSITION STATEMENT
TENNESSEE BOARD OF PHYSICAL THERAPY**

REFERRAL EXCEPTIONS AND DIRECT ACCESS

Tenn. Code Ann. § 63-13-303 establishes referral exceptions and controls direct access to physical therapy services. This statute was amended on April 4, 2023, to permit a physical therapist to treat a patient without a referral and within the scope of practice of physical therapy within certain parameters and when certain requirements are satisfied. Tenn. Code Ann. § 63-13-303(a)(1)(D) creates one of the parameters within which a physical therapist may treat a patient without a referral:

(ii) If the physical therapist determines, based on clinical evidence, that no progress has been made with respect to that patient's condition within thirty (30) days, immediately following the date of the patient's initial visit with the physical therapist, then the physical therapist does not provide additional physical therapy services and refers the patient to a healthcare practitioner who qualifies as a referring practitioner

It is the position of the Board of Physical Therapy that, pursuant to Tenn. Code Ann. § 63-13-303(a)(1)(D)(ii) a physical therapist who is treating a patient without a referral must discharge/discontinue physical therapy services and refer the patient to an appropriate healthcare practitioner after the initial thirty (30) days **where no progress has been made** with that patient.

The Board of Physical Therapy believes that this position statement will help address the confusion among licensees regarding direct access to physical therapy services.

AMENDED AND ADOPTED by the Board of Physical Therapy on this the 12th day of May, 2023.



**Chairperson
Board of Physical Therapy**