AUTONOMOUS PHYSICAL THERAPIST PRACTICE: DEFINITIONS AND PRIVILEGES  BOD P03-03-12-28 [Position]

Autonomous physical therapist practice is characterized by independent, self-determined professional judgment and action. Physical therapists have the capability, ability and responsibility to exercise professional judgment within their scope of practice, and to professionally act on that judgment.

Privileges of Autonomous Practice in 2020

Each of these elements imbeds two over-arching concepts: recognition of and respect for physical therapists as the practitioners of choice, and recognition of and respect for the education, experience, and expertise of physical therapists in their professional scope of practice.

1. Direct and unrestricted access:
   The physical therapist has the professional capability and ability to provide to all individuals the physical therapy services they choose without legal, regulatory, or payer restrictions.

2. Professional ability to refer to other health care providers:
   The physical therapist has the professional capability and ability to refer to others in the health care system for identified or possible medical needs beyond the scope of physical therapist practice.

3. Professional ability to refer to other professionals:
   The physical therapist has the professional capability and ability to refer to other professionals for identified patient/client needs beyond the scope of physical therapist practice.

4. Professional ability to refer for diagnostic tests:
   The physical therapist has the professional capability and ability to refer for diagnostic tests that would clarify the patient/client situation and enhance the provision of physical therapy services.

Relationship to Vision 2020: Autonomous Practice
(Practice Department, ext 3176)

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Explanation of Reference Numbers:
BOD P00-00-00-00 stands for Board of Directors/month/year/page/vote in the Board of Directors Minutes; the "P" indicates that it is a position (see below). For example, BOD P11-97-06-18 means that this position can be found in the November 1997 Board of Directors minutes on Page 6 and that it was Vote 18.