

February 5, 2020

***NOTICE TO COLLEAGUES AND PATIENTS***

***Legislative Success Extends Access to Physical Therapy Providers***

Indianapolis, IN – On May 1, 2019, Governor Holcomb signed SB 586 into law, and the updates to the Indiana Physical Therapy Practice Act went into effect, on July 1, 2019. A key update to the practice act includes expansion of direct access to physical therapy services from 24 days to 42 days.

SB 586 permits physical therapists to evaluate clients, develop a treatment plan, and carry out those treatments for up to 42 days without first having a referral from another health care provider. This effectively speeds up the path to recovery for many Indiana residents, and brings Indiana closer to joining the 18 states with “unrestricted” direct access to physical therapy.

“Physical therapy is a proven effective treatment for muscle aches, joint pain, and mobility issues. Clients are less likely to need potentially addicting pain medications or expensive imaging when they see a physical therapist first,” said John Kiesel, PT, DPT, Board-Certified Clinical Specialist in Orthopaedic Physical Therapy and Chair of the APTA Indiana Public Relations Committee.

A recent report on early physical therapy treatment for low back pain showed a significant reduction in opioid use, spine injections, and spine surgery. The study concluded that early access to physical therapy is capable of reducing health care costs and opioid use. The study was published in the *Archives of Physical Medicine* on July 1, 2019.

“According to a Gallop poll, 78% of Americans prefer non-drug treatments for physical pain. Physical therapy provides a skilled treatment for pain relief that has been proven to reduce opioid use by more than 60% in clients accessing our care,” said John Kiesel, PT, DPT, Board-Certified Clinical Specialist in Orthopaedic Physical Therapy.

**About APTA Indiana**

The Indiana Chapter of the American Physical Therapy Association’s mission is to maximize the lifelong health, function, and well-being of people in Indiana and advance the practice of physical therapy through advocacy, collaboration, and education. Visit [ChoosePT.com](https://www.choosept.com/Default.aspx) to learn more about the conditions physical therapists treat, and to find a physical therapist in your area.

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