May 29 2019

Dear NC Chiropractic Providers:

I wanted to take an opportunity to introduce a new concept from the NC Board of Chiropractic Examiners (NCBOCE) that should provide more information and clarity as Providers in North Carolina evolve in their practices and treatment options for their patients.

In years past the NCBOCE was able to manage scope of practice questions easily by simply referring to our Practice Act which essentially says that if a procedure was taught in the majority of Chiropractic Colleges that it would be considered “in scope”. That 100+ year old document has just been unable to evolve with time and new modalities or forms of treatment now available to Doctors of Chiropractic. We have a plethora of post-doctoral diplomats, certifications and other continuing education that provides a much more substantial “tool box” for Doctors of Chiropractic to utilize in the 21st century.

As was demonstrated in the PT/Acupuncture lawsuit settled in January of this year the court essentially provided that each regulatory board had jurisdiction on their licentuates even in a circumstance where there was “overlapping” questions of scope. Bottom line is that the Acupuncture Board could not tell the PT Board what their licentuates could or could not do in their practices. There are statutorial limitations on each group but it was the individual regulatory boards that could determine specific scope issues outside of those boundaries.

Given this, the Board is drafting “Position Statements” that provide direction or clarification of what our licentuates can offer in their practices. To be clear, these are NOT going to be guidelines or a rewrite of our Practice guidelines. These position statements will provide direction to providers and other interested parties on a variety of topics from a modality to a “how to close your practice” laundry list. Bottom line is that we want to regulate more broadly allowing Doctors to offer more contemporary treatments as well as providing better access to NC Chiropractors for practice related questions. You can already see a section on our website that list a few of these along with our statute and rules.

While the upside of this is very positive there is an increased responsibility to the Providers. For example if you want to do Dry Needling, we’re likely NOT to demand or regulate a specific number of hours to do so. But with that comes the responsibility of Providers to have the requisite training to provide this service. My advice is that if you are adding a unique service into your office is that you be confidently trained in that procedure. You will be held to a high standard of care!

In addition to these Position Statements the Board continues to work on streamlining and professionalizing the Board office. You will continue to see changes in our website, reports of more collaboration with other regulatory boards and more resources for both the public and providers.

Lastly is a very special note of congratulations to our sitting Board members as well as Drs Estramonte and Hilton (Immediate 2 past Presidents), Dr. Jessie Benningfield ( immediate past Board member) and Executive Director Tom Sullivan, for our Boards receiving the **Pennebaker Wiley Outstanding Board Award** at the National FCLB meeting in San Diego last month. This prestigious award represents the work of not only this current Board but those of these past two Presidents, staff and our immediate past Board members. I am very proud of what’s been accomplished and what continues to evolve for our future.