



KENTUCKY BOARD OF PHYSICAL THERAPY

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Governor

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Rebecca E. Klusch
Executive Director

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Opinion and Declaratory ruling regarding Discharge Summary by the Kentucky Board of Physical Therapy.

Introduction.

The Board has authorized this Opinion as an Opinion and Declaratory Ruling pursuant to KRS 13A.130(3) and KRS 13A.010(2)(b) as the agency with jurisdiction to interpret the statutes and regulations governing the practice of physical therapy in the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

Question presented.

You have asked the general question of who is responsible for performing and documenting the discharge summary mandated by 201 KAR 22:053 Section 5(4)(a) and (b). You present the situation where, in an acute care setting, patients are being continually admitted and discharged at all hours of the day and night, including weekends. Over the course of the patient's admission and subsequent acute care treatment, over weekdays and weekends, it is possible for the initial evaluation to be performed by one physical therapist, ensuing daily physical therapy to be performed by a second physical therapist, and a discharge summary or final treatment to be performed by yet another physical therapist.

Analysis.

Unless there exists institutional policy that specifically designates a responsible physical therapist or physical therapist assistant for the completion of the discharge summary, the Board concludes the physical therapist who performed the initial evaluation is responsible for assuring completion of the discharge summary as defined by 201 KAR 22:053 Section 5(4)(a) and (b). The Board deems the physical therapist who first assessed the patient with an initial evaluation to be the treating physical therapist of record and thus is responsible for assuring the completion of the discharge summary.

Your practice setting and institutional policy of your employer may affect this conclusion. For example, if your employer has a written policy designating the last treating physical therapist to perform the discharge summary, then the Board would rely on the last treating physical therapist's compliance with the employer's policy. In the absence of such an employment policy and treatment protocol, the Board would default to the physical therapist who first performed the initial evaluation.

If your practice setting and institutional policy does not cover this particular situation, the Board would also look for a documented agreement in the medical record to "hand off" the patient's care to another physical therapist. This physical therapist would accept responsibility for completing the discharge summary.

The time line in which your facility processes the medical record, and the various locations it may reside does not eliminate the physical therapist's or physical therapist assistant's responsibility for documentation. The physical therapist of record, whomever that may be, is responsible for the required physical therapy documentation as mandated by law.

The Board trusts this response fully answers your inquiry. If not, please write to the Board again for clarification if necessary.

Sincerely,

Kentucky Board of Physical Therapy

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ronald Barbato".

Ronald Barbato, PT
Board Chair