



Message from the Executive Director

As the heat of summer in Columbus gives way to crisp autumn days, the Athletic Trainers Section remains very active.

On the down side, the fiscal years 2006-2007 budget bill passed the legislature containing language that will consolidate the activities of 20 regulatory boards, including the OTPTAT Board, under the aegis of the Departments of Health, Commerce, or Public Safety.

As part of the budget bill language, a transition team will study the best way to implement the proposed changes. The transition team consists of representatives of the Departments of Health, Commerce, Public Safety, and Administrative Services, the Office of Budget and Management,

and three directors representing the 20 boards slated for consolidation. I am pleased to report that, along with the directors of the Respiratory Care Board and the Embalmers and Funeral Directors Board, I was selected by my peers to serve as a member of the transition team. It is our hope that with our knowledge of regulation and regulatory systems in other states, we will be able to better educate the other members of the team on the potential benefits and pitfalls of any proposals. On behalf of all licensees and the citizens of Ohio, I will work my hardest to ensure that the high levels of customer service offered by the Board will be maintained under any form of board consolidation.

I hope to have additional information to report about consolidation in the next edition of *AT Perspective*.

On a more positive note, I recently returned from Omaha, Nebraska, where I attended and presented at the Board of Certification's 2005 State Regulatory Conference. The conference focused on issues related to improving regulation of the profession of athletic training.

I presented on the process that a state athletic training licensure board must follow when it disciplines a licensee. I am pleased to report that Ohio is considered one of the leaders in athletic training licensure and regulation.

Licensure vs. Certification: ATC or LAT?

State licensure is required for anyone who practices athletic training in Ohio. Certification is a voluntary credential that many athletic trainers choose to maintain.

In order to obtain Ohio licensure, every athletic trainer must pass the BOC certification examination. Once an individual passes

the BOC examination, they become a certified athletic trainer, or an ATC. The initials ATC are copyrighted by the BOC and should not be used to denote state licensure in Ohio.

After much discussion, the Section decided to encourage all athletic trainers to begin using LAT, in

addition to ATC, to denote licensure. For example, an athletic trainer should use LAT on documentation and paperwork to demonstrate state licensure, not just the "C" used to demonstrate national certification.

At this time, the Section decided to only encourage, not require, the use of LAT.

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Athletic Trainers Section Members

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Important Changes to the Renewal Process for 2006

In May of 2005, the Athletic Trainers Section changed the license renewal rule (OAC 4755-43-08) in an effort to simplify the renewal process.

The change will impact everyone who is required to renew on or before May 15, 2006. Renewal applications will no longer be mailed in October of the year prior to a licensee's expiration. The renewal applications will now be mailed in February of the year a licensee's license expires.

Renewals will be considered late if they are postmarked on or after April 15 of the year of one's license expiration. The late fee is currently \$20, but may be as high as \$45 if the Section chooses to increase their fees.

The only thing that has not changed is the expiration date. For those athletic trainers whose last name begins with the letters A-L, licenses will expire May 15 of even numbered years. For those athletic trainers whose last name begins with the letters M-Z, licenses will expire May 15 of odd numbered years.

It is important that every athletic trainer who renews their license to practice, completes the renewal in its entirety, including a home phone or cell phone number, employment information, answers to all questions regarding both continuing education completion and legal issues, and their signature. Renewals will not be processed unless all of the information is correctly completed.

It is also your responsibility to inform the

Board of any changes to your address and/or employment within 30 days of the change. Renewal applications are mailed to the most current address on file in the Board office. If a renewal is returned, the last known employer of that individual is contacted in an effort to decrease the number of people whose licenses inadvertently expire.

You can email, fax, or mail address and employment changes to the Board. Please visit the Board website (www.otptat.ohio.gov) for contact information.

If you have questions regarding the changes to the renewal process, please contact the Section at: Athletic Trainers Section, 77 South High Street, 16th Floor, Columbus, Ohio, 43215-6108.

Do You Feel Lucky?.....CE and the Audit Process

The Athletic Trainers Section made several revisions to the continuing education rule in May 2005. For example, each athletic trainer must now complete at least one hour of ethics education per renewal cycle.

It is important to remember that maintaining your license is not optional if you want to practice athletic training in Ohio. You are required to meet the licensure and continuing education requirements for Ohio to practice athletic training in Ohio.

When reviewing audits and continuing education coursework, the Section uses rule 4755-45-01 as its guide. All of the continuing education guidelines, acceptable categories, and minimums and maximums are specified within the rule. Excuses for not completing the required amount of continuing education range from uncertainty of the requirements to gambling on not being audited.

The Section takes continuing education very seriously and wants each licensee to understand that it is their responsibility to not only attend and complete continuing

education courses, but also to remain current and understand the requirements to maintain an Ohio athletic training license.

There were several individuals that the Section disciplined for failure to complete their continuing education for the 2005 renewal. The Section does not take individuals who have not completed their continuing education lightly. The minimum/maximums are strictly enforced because there are a number of ways to earn free or inexpensive continuing education credit. For example, an athletic trainer can attend district meetings or take the Ohio laws and rules examination for free continuing education credits. There are also many websites that offer affordable continuing education courses that have been approved by either the Ohio Athletic Trainers Board or the BOC.

Although most licensees meet the CE requirements, each renewal cycle a handful of athletic trainers fail to complete the appropriate amount and type of continu-

ing education. Due to a recent increase in the number of athletic trainers who failed to complete the mandatory continuing education requirements, the Section increased the number of licensees being audited by 50%. The Section will evaluate the 2005 audit prior to the 2006 renewal and then make a determination on a percentage of athletic trainers who are renewing that will be audited.

It is recommended that every athletic trainer review the Athletic Training Laws and Rules and become familiar and remain current on the continuing education requirements. You can always contact the Board if you have a question regarding the appropriateness of a course or if you have a general question regarding the continuing education requirements.

Licensure in Ohio is MANDATORY in order to practice athletic training and certification is optional.

Frequently Asked Questions

The Athletic Trainers Section receives numerous letters requesting interpretations of the Athletic Training Practice Act. These letters typically reflect current issues and problems experienced by licensees in the delivery of services.

The following is a list of FAQ's and general responses given by the Section. This is by no means a complete list, so if you have any questions related to the practice, please do not hesitate to contact the Section in writing for clarification.

What restrictions does an athletic trainer face working in a clinical setting if there is not a physical therapist on staff?

Pursuant to section 4755.60 (A) of the Revised Code and rule 4755-42-02 of the Administrative Code, athletic trainers must practice upon the referral of an individual licensed in Ohio to practice medicine and surgery, osteopathic medicine and surgery, podiatric medicine and surgery, chiropractic, dentistry, or physical therapy. Athletic trainers may not accept referrals from physician assistants or practitioners of the limited branches of medicine.

If a situation exists where a patient referred to the athletic trainer by a physical therapist may benefit from athletic training services, i.e. a patient's condition is an athletic injury, then the physical therapist may refer that particular patient to an athletic trainer. If this procedure is followed, the athletic trainer must perform an injury assessment and determine the athletic training plan of care.

Under an athletic training referral, the athletic trainer functions independently and is responsible for documentation. Pursuant to rule 4755-46-01 of the Administrative Code, unlicensed individuals functioning under the supervision of a licensed athletic trainer may perform designated routine tasks related to the operation of athletic training provided that the supervising athletic trainer is on-site to supervise the delegated tasks.

Under section 4755.64 (A)(7) of the Re-

vised Code and rule 4755-41-01 (C)(2) of the Administrative Code, it is the responsibility of the athletic trainer to determine whether a referral is within the trainer's scope of practice, level of competence, and experience. In the event that an inappropriate referral is received, the athletic trainer should contact the referring practitioner and discuss how to proceed.

Nothing in the Ohio Athletic Training Practice Act prevents athletic trainers from billing for services. The Athletic Trainers Section suggests contacting the Ohio Athletic Trainers Association or the National Athletic Trainers Association or refer to CPT codes listed under physical medicine.

When a patient is seen in a multidisciplinary facility, the professional who performs the initial evaluation must oversee that patient's care.

For example, if a patient is referred for evaluation and treatment and an athletic trainer performs the initial evaluation, the patient is under athletic training care and guidelines. If the patient is initially seen by a physical therapist, the patient would be a physical therapy patient and fall under their guidelines.

A dual credentialed person must decide at the time of the initial evaluation which professional discipline they will utilize and document the evaluation appropriately.

What restrictions does an AT face in a clinical setting without a PT on staff?

Can athletic trainers apply topical medications, such as Dermabond?

Pursuant to section 4755.60(A) of the Ohio Revised Code, athletic

trainers may administer topical drugs that have been prescribed by a licensed health care professional authorized to prescribe drugs. Since Dermabond is a topical medication, it is within the athletic training scope of practice to administer it pursuant to a physician's order.

How do I meet the new ethics requirement to renew my athletic training license?

In May 2005, the Athletic Trainers Sec-

tion amended rule 4755-45-01 of the Administrative Code to require all athletic trainers to complete at least one contact hour of ethics continuing education. All individuals whose licenses expire on May 15, 2006 must meet this requirement to renew their license.

There are several options available to meet the ethics requirement.

How do I meet the new ethics requirement?

One option is to pass the Ohio athletic trainers laws and rules examination. The examination may be downloaded from the Board's website at no charge. To obtain credit, mail or fax the answer sheet to the Board where Board staff will grade the exam. The Board will notify you of your exam score. Another option is attendance at a presentation by the Executive Director or member of the Athletic Trainers Section.

In addition to those options, many on-line CE providers offers courses that meet the ethics requirement established in rule 4755-45-01. Individuals may also complete a self study course. If a licensee is audited, proof of completion of the self study is a copy of the certificate of completion from the self study sponsor. There is a maximum of 30 hours that may be earned under the self study category per renewal cycle.

2006 Meeting Dates

All Board meetings are open to the public and anyone is welcome to attend. Please contact the Board at (614) 466-3774 or board@otptat.state.oh.us to verify the time and meeting room of any meeting you would like to attend.

The following schedule is tentative and is subject to change.

January 5, 2006
March 29, 2006
May 11, 2006
July 26, 2006
September 21, 2006
November 16, 2006

Most Board meetings are held in the Board Room on the 31st floor of the Vern Riffe Center for Government and the Arts, 77 South High Street, Columbus, Ohio.

Census Count

As of August 17, 2005, there are:

1,694 athletic trainers;

3,732 occupational therapists;

299 occupational therapists in escrow;

2,147 occupational therapy assistants;

192 occupational therapy assistants in escrow;

6,390 physical therapists; and

4,337 physical therapist assistants with active Ohio licenses.

To verify if your license is active, please visit the Board website and click the "License Verification" link.

Coaching Certification and the Ohio Dept. of Education

Representatives from the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) attended the Section's June meeting to discuss coaching certification, which was formerly called the pupil activity validation program.

The Section members expressed their concerns regarding the varied training coaches receive when they attend the seminars and are also concerned that the program curriculum has become too advanced for non healthcare practitioners.

For example, the Section members discussed the fact that the current training

program teaches coaches how to make return to play decisions. The Section members are concerned with that particular aspect of the program because of the issue of liability and because coaches are not trained and/or are not licensed healthcare practitioners who are qualified to make return to play decisions.

The Section is also concerned that the program differentiates between the type of CPR and First Aid training the coach must receive. Coaches are required to obtain CPR certification from an organization like the American Red Cross. However, the first aid training

that the coaches receive depends on the program presenter, therefore, the training varies. The Section's opinion is that both First Aid and CPR certifications are extremely important for coaching staff, and because of that, the Section plans to recommend that ODE consider requiring first aid certification, along with the CPR certification, instead of the department developing their own curriculum for first aid training.

The Section will continue their discussion with ODE and will keep you updated on their progress in improving the coaching certification program.

Contact Us

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