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Montana Association of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine

November 20, 2015

www.montanamMAOM.org

Honorable EAIC Chairman Ryan Lynch and members of the committee:

This letter is to summarize a meeting held October 22, 2015, as you requested at your last meeting. Representatives of the Montana Association of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine and representatives of the Board of Physical Therapy Examiners met, with Judy Bovington, DLI Legal Services Supervisor, facilitating, for a very educational, open and genuine conversation on the topics of dry needling and safety concerns of the public. It was determined that we would agree to disagree on the conflicting opinion of whether or not dry needling is acupuncture, and we moved forward discussing the following:

- Why are acupuncturists "afraid" of physical therapists doing dry needling?
- Do the current offered trainings in dry needling meet the suggested recommendations made by research in the physical therapy profession for public safety? A current research article by the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy states that beyond a 3,200 hour doctorate level degree in physical therapy, PTs need 16% more education to be qualified to safely perform dry needling.
- What percentage of training is missing for PTs who do not have a doctorate of Physical Therapy? How will the PTs accommodate for the difference in education? Many PTs in Montana do not have doctorates as the doctorate program has been offered for less than ten years.
- Why is the credentialing process important in educational training programs?
- Why is on-site supervision essential to help physical therapists keep the public safe?
- Do acupuncturist really understand the level of training a physical therapist receives for dry needling?

As a result of this conversation, the acupuncture representatives are even more convinced that the current dry needling classes offered to the physical therapists are not meeting the standards of safety necessary to keep the public safe, and furthermore, these classes **ARE NOT MEETING THE STANDARDS THAT THE PT INDUSTRY IS RECOMMENDING**. The meeting was a very peaceful, honest and forthright. We have great respect for the physical therapy profession. We believe, however, that physical therapists' desire to practice dry needling is out weighing public safety. The physical therapists do not have training programs that currently meet any researched standards for safety. Our recommendation is to require all physical therapists practicing dry needling to obtain an acupuncture license, ensuring a proper level of training and the safety of Montanans.

We have also enclosing signed petitions and letters from Montanans around the state who felt concerns of the public were not fully reflected at the last EAIC meeting. These signatures are a small sample of residents in over 20 cities who are asking you to take further measures to insist that the BOPTE pursue this expansion of scope through the legislative process as proscribed by law.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Bree", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Bree Manninen L.Ac., MAAOM Vice President