

Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy
Draft Model for Supervised Clinical Practice (SCP)
November 2011

Authority

Statutory authority will be needed in order to require completion of a supervised clinical practice from the foreign educated physical therapist. One example of statutory language may be found in the 5th edition of the FSBPT Model Practice Act. Rules language can be used to further define the parameters of the supervised clinical practice (SCP). Language either in statute or regulation needs to allow for the board to waive or exempt any, or all, of the requirements for the SCP.

Prerequisites

To improve the likelihood of a successful SCP, the board may consider requiring any, or all, of the following PRIOR to the SCP:

- Complete the application process including payment of fees.
- Provide satisfactory evidence that the applicant's education is substantially equivalent to the education of physical therapists educated in an accredited entry-level program as determined by the board. If required, the educational credentials evaluation must be completed and submitted to the board prior to the SCP.
- Complete any additional education as required by the board.
- Pass a board-approved English proficiency examination if the applicant's native language is not English.
- Meet any other requirements established by board rule if applicable.
- The board provides for a temporary permit, provisional or restricted license for the purpose of participating in a supervised clinical practice.

In the commentary of the 5th edition of the FSBPT Model Practice Act, there are three exceptions noted for use of a restricted license other than for disciplinary actions: 1) with a voluntary substance abuse program, and 2) with a professional re-entry after a lapse of a license for two or more renewal periods, and 3) supervised clinical practice for foreign educated applicants.

Timing of the NPTE

The SCP would take place prior to the NPTE. Successful completion of the SCP is a prerequisite to the NPTE.

Parameters

Length

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Minimum requirement: 1000 clinical hours to be completed in no fewer than six months and no longer than one year.

Number of Attempts

Limited to a total of two per applicant.

Qualified supervisor

The clinical supervisor and a backup supervisor should be approved by the board. In approving a supervisor, the board should consider the following qualifications:

- the supervisor should have a minimum of three years of clinical experience
- the supervisor should hold an unrestricted license
- there is no conflict of interest in the supervisor's relationship to the candidate
- the supervisor should have direct patient care responsibilities in their current role
- the supervisor should have previous experience as a clinical instructor

Supervision

The level of supervision during the SCP should be onsite supervision as defined in the FSBPT Model Practice Act:

“Onsite supervision” means supervision provided by a physical therapist who is continuously onsite and present in the department or facility where services are provided. The supervising therapist is immediately available to the person being supervised and maintains continued involvement in the necessary aspects of patient care.

Facility

The facility should be approved by the board. When approving a qualified facility, the board should consider the following:

- the depth and breadth of clinical experience provided by the facility
- the facility's levels of staffing
- the patient volume
- the variety of patient diagnoses
- the opportunity to interact with other healthcare providers in the facility
- location of the facility; different scope of practice in different state, unique practice act

Disclosure

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The board should consider potential conflicts of interest between the facility and the applicant. Any disclosures related to conflict of interest should be included as part of the application for SCP submitted to the board. SCP candidates, supervisors, and/or facilities must disclose any known potential for conflict of interest or appearance of conflict. Material gain resulting from candidate's successful completion of the SCP should be furnished to the Board prior to the approval of the SCP.

The facilities disclosure statement should include the following:

- the facilities intent to hire the applicant upon completion of SCP
- stipend or salary to the applicant
- relationship to the supervisor

Performance Evaluation

The board should establish guidelines for completing the performance evaluation.

- Suggested timelines would be:
 - midterm to be completed after 500 clinical hours and submitted to the board within three days (72 hours)
 - final review completed after 1000 clinical hours and submitted to the board within three days (72 hours)

- If available, the board should utilize an evaluation tool that has been determined to be valid and reliable for evaluating clinical performance of foreign educated physical therapists.

Final Outcome

1. Successful completion of the SCP:

FEPT would be eligible to sit for the NPTE.

2. Unsuccessful completion of initial SCP:

The Board should consider developing options for unsuccessful applicants which may include:

- extending the SCP in the same facility up to double the initial time
- complete a second SCP in a new facility
- denial of application for second SCP with opportunity for due process

Exemptions

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The board may waive all or a portion of the SCP at the discretion of the board. The board may want to consider:

- the applicant's previous licensed clinical practice in the U.S. Healthcare system in making the decision regarding SCP
- the applicant's performance on the mid-term evaluation