



April 13, 2023

The Honorable Jim Wood, DDS
Chair, Assembly Health Committee
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 931 (Irwin), Prior Authorization: Physical Therapy: *Support Position*

Dear Assemblymember Wood,

The Physical Therapy Board of California (PTBC), at its March 2023 meeting, adopted a Support position on AB 931 (as introduced 2/14/2023), which would prohibit a health care service plan contract or health insurance policy issued, amended, or renewed on or after January 1, 2025, that provides coverage for physical therapy from imposing prior authorization for the initial 12 treatment visits for a new episode of care for physical therapy.

The PTBC recognizes that AB 931 is an important patient care and access to care issue and prevents unnecessary review and administrative burden and allows for early access to medically necessary physical therapy treatment by allowing physical therapists to provide 12 visits before continued authorization is needed which is a great benefit to the consumer.

Many health plans/insurers and third-party administrators are using computer algorithms and automated systems for determining the care their beneficiaries may receive. These practices are inconsistent with community standards of care for symptoms and diagnoses presented by patients and can directly limit the numbers of visits patients may obtain. This creates barriers and challenges to patients by delaying access to medically necessary care and increases the administrative burden required to navigate prior authorization, unnecessary reviews and manage appeals. Unfortunately, these barriers can result in delays and stoppages in care for consumers and these delays in treatment can result in poorer outcomes for the patient and increased health care costs.

The PTBC is mandated by Business and Professions Code Section 2602.1 that PTBC's highest priority is to protect the public. The provisions outlined in AB 931 would greatly benefit California consumers and eliminate delays and provide timely access to care and prevent unnecessary administrative burden, therefore, we are in Support of AB 931.

If additional information is needed, please feel free to contact the Board's Legislative Manager, Brooke Arneson at (916) 561-8260.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tonia McMillian". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tonia McMillian
President, Physical Therapy Board of California

Cc:

The Honorable Assemblymember Irwin

Honorable Members, Assembly Health Committee

Jennifer Simoes, Deputy Director, Legislative Affairs, Deputy Director, Division of
Legislative Affairs, Department of Consumer Affairs