



NEW JERSEY CHAPTER
AMERICAN PHYSICAL
THERAPY ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

P.O. BOX 705
TRENTON, N.J. 08604

JULY, 1975

PRESIDENT'S REPORT - 1975

The New Jersey Chapter now ranks 11th in membership enrollment in the Association. The rapid growth of the chapter and the many problems that growth brings has been handled well by the chapter's Board. The efforts of dedicated officers and committee chairmen have brought about the successful completion of many priority items. I shall review and comment briefly on just a few of those priorities.

Legislation for the amendment of the P. T. practice act and the licensure of the P. T. Assistant has passed both houses of state government. The governor's signature is required for this legislation to become a law. Once that is obtained, a five year effort to bring our practice act to the level of most in the U. S. will be completed.

The realignment of the districts is now complete. It is hoped, that through our new geographical alignment and competent leadership, member participation at the district level will increase.

The Board recognizes the fact that most stimuli for Board action has come from the chapter over the past few years. The hope for the future is that the districts will provide the impetus necessary to help establish the chapter's position on issues and priorities. For the chapter to be the spokesmen for physical therapy in the health delivery system of New Jersey, the districts must be well informed and active.

A proposed peer review mechanism has been developed and will be utilized for a one year trial period, if approved by the membership. A committee to administrate this mechanism is also proposed as a law amendment.

Quality assurance is a prime concern of the Health Industry today. Government is actively seeking involvement of non-physician health professionals in the Professional Standard Review Organization. The chapter has established a liaison through Mr. Jeff Manheimer and is actively seeking involvement in this program in New Jersey. As the chapter moves forward in this area it behooves each member to become actively involved in self evaluation and learn audit procedures as well as taking advantage of any services the chapter offers in regards to quality assessment.

Meeting the need for members' continuing education continues as a top priority. The Continuing Education Committee has offered programs on timely subjects during the past year. The continuing education credit program is nearing the end of its first year of operation. This pilot program must be fully evaluated by the Board over the summer and a final program should be presented to you at the fall chapter meeting.

These activities will continue in the year to come and new issues and problems will have to be dealt with. These probably will include;

1. The implications and application of the medicare salary equivalency laws must be clarified.
2. The professional status of therapists under the new provisions of the Taft-Hartley act may be tested.
3. The principle of freedom of choice for patients and how it relates to therapy must be investigated.
4. COMMUNICATION TO THE MEMBERSHIP MUST BE IMPROVED BOTH IN FREQUENCY AND CONTENT.

(con't. page 2, col. 1)

STATEMENT ON ELECTROMYGRAPHICAL TESTS

Presented to
STATE BOARD OF MEDICAL EXAMINERS
on May 14, 1975

Electromyographical testing should be carried out in a manner which would be both safe for the patient and produce accurate information for the physician responsible for making or confirming a diagnosis.

Physical therapists throughout the United States have not only demonstrated the competencies required to learn the E.M.G. testing procedures but have gained the confidence and respect of physicians in all areas of specialization by producing test data in a precise, accurate and safe manner.

Physical therapists in New Jersey who have knowledge, training and experience in providing this test should not be prohibited from doing so.

The number of competent electromyographers in the state is most likely limited. If physical therapists were prohibited from performing this test, this number would be more diminished therefore decreasing its availability while increasing the cost to the consumer. If the test is carried out by a physical therapist it may only be done under the physician's prescription and direct supervision. New Jersey physicians who wish to have the E.M.G. test performed by a competent physical therapist should have the right to do so.

The New Jersey Chapter of the A.P.T.A. is not suggesting that all physical therapists are trained and qualified to perform E.M.G. tests. Just as it is reasonable to state that all physicians are not trained and qualified to do so. We do suggest that the Board of Medical Examiners establish criteria which may be utilized to determine a qualified electromyographer and that those qualifications not be limited to physicians only. If the Board decides to take this course, physical therapists request the opportunity to provide information relative to the forms of specialized training, education, and experience physical therapists may obtain on E.M.G. testing.

Physical therapists do not wish to diagnose or practice independently. We do wish to have the right to perform tests we have been trained to do in a safe, accurate manner under the prescription of physicians licensed in New Jersey.

G.R. Savander, President
N.J. Chapter - A.P.T.A.

REPLY (May 19, 1975)

After thoroughly reconsidering the question of Electromyographic Testing, ruled that Electromyographic Testing is the practice of medicine and can only be performed by a New Jersey physician holding a plenary license to practice medicine and surgery in the State of New Jersey.