

House Bill 801 (AS PASSED HOUSE AND SENATE)

By: Representatives McCall of the 30<sup>th</sup>, Richardson of the 19<sup>th</sup>, and Tumlin of the 38<sup>th</sup>

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

1 To amend Code Section 43-33-18 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to  
2 refusal to grant or restore licenses of physical therapists, discipline of licensees, and  
3 suspension, revocation, or restriction of licenses, so as to provide for limited circumstances  
4 in which physical therapists may provide services without referrals from appropriate licensed  
5 practitioners of the healing arts; to provide for circumstances in which physical therapists  
6 may treat patients for injuries or conditions that were the subject of prior referrals by  
7 appropriate licensed practitioners of the healing arts; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other  
8 purposes.

9 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

10 style="text-align:center">**SECTION 1.**

11 Code Section 43-33-18 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to refusal to grant  
12 or restore licenses of physical therapists, discipline of licensees, and suspension, revocation,  
13 or restriction of licenses, is amended in subsection (a) by striking the introductory language  
14 and paragraph (1) and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

15 "(a) The board shall have authority to refuse to grant or restore a license to an applicant or  
16 to discipline a physical therapist or physical therapist assistant licensed under this chapter  
17 or any antecedent law upon a finding by the board that the licensee or applicant has:

18 (1)(A) Implemented or continued a program of physical therapy treatment without  
19 consultation with an appropriate licensed practitioner of the healing arts, ~~or in;~~ except  
20 that a physical therapist may implement a program of physical therapy treatment  
21 without consultation with an appropriately licensed practitioner of the healing arts  
22 when:

23 (i) Services are provided for the purpose of fitness, wellness, or prevention that is not  
24 related to the treatment of an injury or ailment; or

25 (ii)(I) The patient was previously diagnosed and received treatment or services for  
26 that diagnosis and the patient returns to physical therapy within 60 days of discharge

1 from physical therapy for problems and symptoms that are related to the initial  
2 referral to the physical therapist. In such a situation the physical therapist shall  
3 notify the original referral source of the return to physical therapy within five  
4 business days; and

5 (II) The physical therapist holds a master or doctorate degree from a professional  
6 physical therapy program that is accredited by a national accreditation agency  
7 recognized by the United States Department of Education and approved by the  
8 Georgia State Board of Physical Therapy or the physical therapist has completed at  
9 least two years of practical experience as a licensed physical therapist.

10 If after 90 days of initiating physical therapy services the physical therapist determines  
11 that no substantial progress has been made with respect to the primary complaints of  
12 the patient, the physical therapist shall refer the patient to an appropriately licensed  
13 practitioner of the healing arts. If at any time the physical therapist has reason to  
14 believe that the patient has symptoms or conditions that require treatment or services  
15 beyond the scope of practice of the physical therapist, the physical therapist shall refer  
16 the patient to an appropriately licensed practitioner of the healing arts; or

17 (B) In the case of practice as a physical therapist assistant, practiced other than under  
18 the supervision and direction of a licensed physical therapist;”

19 **SECTION 2.**

20 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.