



NJAAOM

New Jersey Association of
Acupuncture & Oriental Medicine

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For Immediate Release:

New Jersey Attorney General Hands Down Opinion on Long Debated Dry Needling by Physical Therapists

CEDAR GROVE, NEW JERSEY – February 15, 2017 -- On February 9, the New Jersey Attorney General ruled that under the current statute, physical therapists are not authorized to engage in the practice of intramuscular stimulation or dry needling. This decision comes after a long dispute between the State Board of Physical Therapy Examiners and the New Jersey Acupuncture Examining Board as to whether acupuncture falls outside the scope of practice of physical therapy.

The issue first arose 2006, when a licensed physical therapist sought the Physical Therapy Board's opinion as to whether intramuscular stimulation fell within their realm of treatment. At that time, the Board indicated that physical therapy excludes invasive procedures. In 2009, the topic arose again, and this time, despite the absence of any legislative change, the Board indicated that nothing in the rules and regulations prohibited licensed physical therapists from dry needling, if they had proper training. This misinterpretation of the scope of practice prompted an increasing number of physical therapists to practice unregulated acupuncture without proper training and licensing.

According to the New Jersey Acupuncture Practice Act the unlicensed practice of acupuncture is a crime in the third degree. To ensure the safety of patients and the proper training and licensing of professionals, the New Jersey Association of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (NJAAOM) fought tirelessly for the New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs to provide guidance on the topic, eventually seeking the Attorney General's ruling on the matter.

"The opinion rendered by the New Jersey Attorney General is decisive and unambiguous, and ensures that no other professional board uses the same tactic of negative logic to expand their scope of practice," said Jason Sargis, President of NJAAOM. "We have waited a long time for this, and it is a victory not only for acupuncturists in New Jersey, but those practicing nationwide."

To read the Attorney General's full opinion, please visit <http://www.njaaom.net/>.

About NJAOM:

The New Jersey Association of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (NJAOM), is the Garden State's professional organization of Licensed Acupuncturists and supporters of Oriental Medicine dedicated to promoting the profession of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine by striving for the highest standards of patient care, education and integrity, to ensure the health and well-being of the public.

The profession grows and evolves through practitioner support and NJAOM supports the practitioner by speaking for legislation that advances our profession and speaking against legislation that would harm or hinder our profession.

NJAOM serves the public through education via lectures, the media, publications, and referral services.

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