



To "D" or Not to "D"

THAT IS THE QUESTION

DR. GEORGE J. DAVIES DPT, SCS, ATC, LAT, CSCS

- ▶ A title – DR
- ▶ His name
- ▶ A post-professional degree – DPT
- ▶ A board certification – SCS (ABPTS sports clinical specialist)
- ▶ A certification – ATC
- ▶ A regulatory designation – LAT (licensed athletic trainer)
- ▶ A certification – CSCS (certified strength & conditioning specialist)
- ▶ So what is missing here in George's list? Anything?





George Davies, DPT

Board Certified Sports Clinical Specialist

Licensed Athletic Trainer

Certified Strength and Condition Specialist

Here is the issue:

1. Every PT in Arizona must now use the PT regulatory designation and use it first. Example:

Jane Doe, PT, MS, OCS

Jane Doe, PT, DPT

2. This will not change for any licensee until we change our statutes allowing for DPT (now only a professional degree) to be used as a regulatory designation. Example:

Jane Doe, DPT, OCS

3. The APTA, through RC 9-14 (an Arizona motion) opted not to consider a two-tiered system of regulatory designations. Example:

John Doe, PT, OCS

Jane Doe, DPT, OCS

4. Rather, APTA has opted to pursue a plan for uniform transition to a single regulatory designation of "DPT" for all physical therapists in all states by 2025 regardless of highest earned professional degree.

Here is the question:

- ▶ Whether to pursue such a regulatory change in Arizona earlier than the 2025 timeframe that the House has adopted as a nationwide target?
- ▶ With 4 (or 5) PT schools graduating DPTs might we as a state reach a critical mass far earlier?

History of the topic

- ▶ Vision 2020 – becoming a “doctoring profession” by 2020
- ▶ The question has always existed – an academic/professional “doctor” or a regulatory recognized “doctor” or both?
- ▶ Arizona motion in 2005 House of Delegates
- ▶ Task force was appointed with a combined task force and Board recommendations that came to the 2006 HoD

History of the topic

The Task Force Report and Board recommendations included:

- ▶ *“The regulatory designator should be changed to be consistent with Vision 2020.”*
- ▶ *“All state practice acts will have to be changed to reflect the change in designator and to provide title protection.”*
- ▶ *“At the point in time in which the majority of licensed physical therapists have earned a DPT degree and/or the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education changes the Evaluative Criteria for Accreditation of Education Programs for the Preparation of Physical Therapists to reflect that the minimum degree is a doctoral degree, the APTA will promote changing the regulatory designator in all jurisdictions to indicate that physical therapy is a doctoring profession.”*

History of the topic

In 2013, the HoD adopted a new Vision Statement.

In the discussion around adoption of this new Vision the concept of academic degree vs regulatory designation and how that relates to a doctoring profession was still not clear.

Immediately after the 2013 HoD the Arizona delegation began crafting what would become RC 9-14 Pursuit of DPT as the Regulatory Designation of Physical Therapists.

History of the topic

RC 9-14 Pursuit of DPT as the Regulatory Designation of Physical Therapists

That the American Physical Therapy Association pursue a uniform change in the regulatory designation of physical therapists in all states to “DPT” by the year 2020.

A single-sentence motion followed by 7 pages of support statement, plus a successful campaign that started early to inform other delegations.

Supportive Points

- ▶ A continuation and completion of Vision 2020 (as also envisioned by the 2006 Board and Task Force recommendations)
- ▶ Compared the pathway of other doctoring professions: MD/DO/DDS, OD, JD, DPM, and in contrast to Pharmacists (PharmD vs RPh)
- ▶ Importance of using DPT as the designator and not other letters
- ▶ Identified public protection elements:
 - ▶ Provided clarity for the public in the qualifications/competence of PTs
 - ▶ Likely will increase access to PT services
 - ▶ Strengthens the standards of practice and minimal competence levels
- ▶ Emphasis on shared competence of all versus grandfathering of a few

The results of the House

That the American Physical Therapy Association pursue a uniform change in the regulatory designation of physical therapists in all states to “DPT” by the year 2020.

The results of the House

That the American Physical Therapy Association shall begin to pursue a uniform change in the regulatory designation of physical therapists in all states to “DPT” by the year ~~2020~~ 2025.

- ▶ The vote to amend was about a 60% to 40% split.
- ▶ The vote to adopt the entire motion was a voice vote with likely less than a dozen voices heard in opposition.

The results of the House

Arizona then moved to amend RC 10-14 Consumer Protection Through Licensure...

(Remember the APTA Policy on Preferred Order of Designations):

1. PT/PTA
2. Highest earned physical therapy-related degree
3. Other earned academic degree(s)
4. American Board of Physical Therapy Specialties certification credentials in alphabetical order
5. Other credentials external to APTA
6. Other certification or professional honors (eg, FAPTA)

The results of the House

To this we added the following proviso by near unanimous voice vote of the House:

Proviso: When the intent of RC 9-14 is achieved in any state and a uniform designation of "DPT" is approved by legislative change of a practice act and/or by a licensing authority for all licensed physical therapists in that state, APTA supports the use of the regulatory designation of "DPT". Such designation denotes the successful completion of professional education and entry-level examination, thus meeting the dual requirements for licensure that assures entry-level competence to practice physical therapy. In this instance, #1 and #2 in the preferred order of letter designations (above) are subsumed in the single designation "DPT" for physical therapists.

The results of the House

Also, this clause was in RC 10-14 originally and in the old policy:

- ▶ APTA supports the use of the title of “Doctor of Physical Therapy” only for physical therapists who have graduated from a doctor of physical therapy (DPT) program. To provide accurate information to consumers, physical therapists who have earned a DPT, and those who have earned other doctoral degrees and use the title “Doctor” in practice settings, shall indicate they are physical therapists. Use of the title shall be in accordance with jurisdictional law.

It was amended by near unanimous voice vote to the following, thus avoiding a 2-tier regulatory designation system:

- ▶ APTA supports the use of the titles “Physical Therapist” and “Doctor of Physical Therapy” only for physical therapists and in accordance with jurisdictional law. To provide accurate information to consumers, use of “Dr.” or “Doctor” should always be associated with words that clearly communicate that it is identifying a licensed physical therapist.

Here is the question:

- ▶ Whether to pursue such a regulatory change in Arizona earlier than the 2025 timeframe that the House has adopted as a nationwide target?
- ▶ With 4 (or 5) PT schools graduating DPTs do we as a state reach a critical mass far earlier?

Action Taken

- ▶ Delegates and Chapter leaders met immediately after the 2014 HoD while still in Charlotte, NC
- ▶ Chapter Legislative Committee supports moving toward an earlier change to our practice act, earlier than the 2025 national target, possibly as early as the 2018 legislative session
- ▶ One meeting was held with Arizona Licensure Board staff to discuss long-range planning
- ▶ Plan for moving forward was first communicated to AzPTA membership in the Fall APTA AZ Newsletter by Blair Packard, and we are here today and tomorrow for further discussion

Planned Action

- ▶ At least the following action items need to occur
 - ▶ Workforce minimum data set collection will occur in the 2016 re-licensure cycle
 - ▶ Will allow more accurate projections of degree distribution in next 5-10 years
 - ▶ Collect graduation (manpower) projections from current AZ PT programs
 - ▶ Identify trends in attrition for current licensees retiring
 - ▶ Develop the actual statute changes required for the practice act
 - ▶ Is it just adding the letter "D" or does it involve more?
 - ▶ Identify how we strengthen AzPTA's grassroots political network and approach/educate legislators and other stakeholders
 - ▶ Outreach and discussion forums with AzPTA membership/others to gain strong support
 - ▶ Assure joint chapter/licensing board support of this future initiative – be on the same page
 - ▶ Inform and involve APTA and FSBPT nationally as possible

Thank you!