



GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

Call to Action:

Urge Your Congressman to Support S. 2818

Which Adds PTs to Medicare Locum Tenens Provision

A bill that would allow physical therapists to use qualified substitute therapists in their practice on a temporary basis and bill Medicare under the practice provider number was introduced in the U. S. Senate on September 16, 2014.

The *Prevent Interruptions to Physical Therapy Act of 2014* (S. 2818) would amend the Medicare statute by adding physical therapists to the list of providers allowed to utilize locum tenens arrangements under Medicare. The bill has bipartisan support with the lead sponsors being Senator Grassley (R-IA), Senator Casey (D-PA), and Senator Moran (R-KS).

PPS needs your help in building support for this bill.

Please contact your U.S. Senator today and urge her/him to cosponsor S. 2818. Below find some points you can make in your email or telephone call. Members in Iowa, Pennsylvania and Kansas are urged to contact the offices of Senators Grassley, Casey, and Moran respectively expressing thanks for their leadership.

- The locum tenens arrangement is a longstanding and widespread practice by which physicians retain substitute physicians in their professional practices when they are absent due to illness, jury duty, pregnancy, vacation or continuing medical education.
- Medicare allows the regular physician to bill and receive payment for the substitute physician's services as if he/she performed them.
- Current Medicare law only allows locum tenens for practitioners identified as "physicians" under Medicare, i.e., medical doctors, osteopaths, dentists, podiatrists, optometrists and chiropractors.
- The use of the locum tenens provisions under Medicare statute is not currently available to physical therapists so PTs are not able to bring in another qualified

licensed physical therapist to treat Medicare patients when the practice owner must be temporarily absent.

- Therefore, many PTs in private practice are forced to interrupt the patient's care which negatively impacts the patient's progress and can be more costly when care is resumed when their absence cannot be avoided.
- The *Prevent Interruptions to Physical Therapy Act of 2014* (S. 2818) would add PTs to the list of professionals allowed to use this provision and would ease this burden on PTs and their patients.
- If enacted, S. 2818 will promote uninterrupted care for physical therapy patients and thereby foster continued progress and positive outcomes.

Tell Us How You Arrange for Coverage for Short Term Absences from Your Practice?

Lobbyists for PPS are working hard to build support for HR3426 which will make it easier for small private practice clinicians to find substitute therapists to fill in for them in cases of short term absences. Please read the linked [document](#) and send your stories to privatepracticesection@apta.org.

Thank you for your willingness to be a part of the PPS Advocacy program.

Sincerely,

John Lockard, PT

Government Affairs Committee Chair

Private Practice Section, APTA
1055 N. Fairfax Street, Suite 204
Alexandria, VA 22314
Tel: (800) 517-1167 or (703) 299-2410
Email: privatepracticesection@apta.org
Website: www.ppsapta.org