



# QA Bulletin

Updating the NDPTA membership on current best evidence and standards of practice

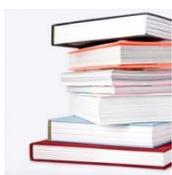
Issue 03



## Documentation

Unsubstantiated evidence of medical necessity and demonstration of skilled care are the two biggest reasons for payment denials. Physical therapists can keep the following tips in mind to improve their documentation and avoid denials.

- 1) Provide a short overview of the patient's response to interventions at the previous treatment.
- 2) Document your clinical decision making process. For instance explain why your altered an exercise program, added or removed a modality, or changed a functional activity.
- 3) Make sure your documentation is non-repetitive, documenting the same thing day after day.
- 4) Make sure when you read your own notes that you can be certain that only a PT could have provided those services.



## Evidence Based Practice

**The effect of early isolated lumbar extension exercise program for patients with herniated disc undergoing lumbar discectomy.** Choi G, et al. 2005. *Neurosurgery*. Oct; 57(4):764-72; discussion 764-72.

Post operative lumbar discectomy patients are commonly seen in PT clinics, however post-operative treatments vary widely. This article investigated the use of 12 week lumbar strengthening exercise program against a control group. Treatment started six weeks after surgery. The results were impressive. Read the abstract [here](#).

### **Body weight changes and corresponding changes in pain and function in persons with symptomatic knee osteoarthritis. A cohort study.**

Riddle DL, Stafford PW. *Arthritis Care and Research*. 2012 (epub ahead of print).

Vision 2020 calls for physical therapists to work autonomously but *collaboratively* with other medical professionals in order to provide the best practice for the patient/client. This article sheds light on the effects of body weight changes in patients with knee OA. The next time a patient with knee OA and obesity walks into our clinic, we may want to consider a referral to a dietitian in addition to the services PT has to offer. Read the abstract [here](#).

### **The Development of an Instrument to Measure Satisfaction in Physical Therapy.**

Goldstein M, Elliot S, Guccione A. *Physical Therapy*. September, 2000. Vol. 80,(9): 852-862.

There are many ways to measure "quality" in physical therapy practice. Therapist may employ the use of physical performance tests, functional

movement tests, and patient reported outcome measures. Another tool therapist may want to include in their toolbox is the use of patient satisfaction surveys. This article proposes the use of a survey that has been shown to meet the criteria required for measuring patient satisfaction in physical therapy clinics. Read the full article [here](#). Login may be required.

**Prognostic Factors for Recovery in Nonspecific Low Back Pain: A Systematic Review.** Verkerk K, et al. *Physical Therapy*. September 2012, Vol. 92(9): 1093-1108.

Recently it was published in *The Journal of Pain* that the annual cost of treating chronic pain is \$635 billion. That amount is more than the annual cost of treating heart disease, cancer, and diabetes. Understanding the prognostic factors in treating non-specific low back pain can help clinicians understand the disease process and make more accurate outcome predictions. While this review is limited by the included articles methodological weakness, it is a good starting point for a deeper understanding of chronic low back pain. Read more [here](#). Login may be required.



## Coding/Billing

Beginning October 1, 2012, significant changes will take place with Medicare's capitation of physical therapy benefits for beneficiaries. You can stay on top of these changes by using the APTA's [new resource](#) that compiles information from the APTA and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services into one convenient webpage. This is a

very helpful page that should make the transition at your clinic as smooth as possible.

The Department of Health and Human Services has issued its final ruling regarding ICD-10. The new mandatory compliance date is **October 1, 2014**.

The APTA has also unveiled its new [ICD-10 resource](#) to help its members better understand the transition to the new code set.



## Did you know?

Keeping up with the newest and latest research is a difficult task in our busy lives. Open Door, the APTA's portal to evidenced based practice, now has a convenient "OneSearch" feature. This allows you to easily search across many databases at one time and is very easy to use. Navigate your browser to [Open Door](#) now to take it for a test drive.