

STATE BOARD OF ORTHOTICS, PROSTHETICS AND PEDORTHICS

appearing before

THE FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT AND AGENCY REVIEW

MARCH 8, 2017

Chairman Faber, Ranking Member Patterson, Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. My name is Mark Levy, and I have enjoyed the honor and challenge to serve as Director of the State Board of Orthotics, Prosthetics and Pedorthics, since 2002.

The State Board of Orthotics, Prosthetics and Pedorthics was established as a Professional and Occupational Licensing Board by enactment of the 123rd General Assembly. We are a very small agency within the state of Ohio structure and may not be very familiar to many members. The professions the Board counts as its constituent stakeholders are not so numerous or deep-pocketed that they can sponsor a legislative presence such as that offered by the medical, nursing, pharmacy, or rehab therapist professions.

Nonetheless, the state of Ohio through enactment of Chapter 4779 has recognized that O&P (Orthotic and Prosthetic) Practitioners are specialized caregivers within the allied healthcare community who bring value and accountability to what would otherwise be treated as “you paid for it, you deal with it, buyer beware” commodity sales. As more funding of healthcare services moves toward the public sector with state and federal treasuries on the hook for reimbursement, provider-based accountability in a structure that seeks to assure patient-centered and outcome-oriented approaches becomes more crucial.

Without licensing of O&P professionals, accountability for these devices is measured only by proof of device delivery, whether by drop-ship from an out of state (and out of reach) business, or from point of sale by a cashier or clerk. In such settings, continuity of care is often documented only by robo-call digital telephone logs.

With licensing comes a code of professional responsibility, scope of practice delineation, and a local, state-based process to address those consumer issues.

The Board's purpose is common to other licensing agencies: to assure the competence of persons licensed to provide the regulated services as a means to protect the public. The Board's licensees are physical rehabilitation specialists. They engage in custom fabricating and fitting devices and partner in continuity of care and treatment team approaches to assure proper fit, utility and positive outcomes for patients' plans of care:

1. Orthotists are medical bracing specialists;
2. Prosthetists have expertise in artificial limb design, customizing and fitting;
3. Pedorthists offer a limited subset of Orthotic interventions: fitting diabetic therapeutic shoes, footwear customized to address foot abnormalities and injuries, and specialized below-the-ankle bracing

The Board regulates professional practices that are classified within the federal healthcare regulatory matrix in the sector known as DMEPOS – which stands for Durable Medical Equipment, Prosthetics and Orthotics, and Supplies.

I believe we have addressed most of the concerns to which we ordinarily speak in the answers to the comprehensive questionnaire that you offered for agency response and which accompanies this written testimony.

As indicated in response to question #4, we believe the proposed consolidation with the OT-PT-AT Board to form a new State Physical Health Services Board could provide an appropriate basis for maintenance of professional licensure for this allied healthcare sector. We recognize the opportunities to gain operational efficiencies and lowering of costs, both to the state and our applicants and licensees. If given the opportunity, we would suggest some further engagement with the language to improve both the transition and administrative efficiencies once completed, and so would respectfully offer our subject matter expertise and request notification of any such opportunity for constructive input.

We have run a projection of budgetary information for FY2018. The proposed allocation of \$122,574 for operations from July 1, 2017 through January 21, 2018, appears to be adequate to cover currently-anticipated costs.

Thank you for your consideration. I welcome the opportunity to answer any questions Members may have, or to stand on these writings as presented.

Respectfully submitted,

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