

William J. O'Brien III, D.O.**
Christopher Belletieri, D.O.**
Elizabeth M. Hibbs, P.A.C.*~
John Pickard, D.O.**
Brian Walsh, D.O.**
Beverly Dorsey-Funk, P.A.C.*
Sandra A. Tiseo, P.A.C.*
Brent M. Nickischer, D.O.*
F. Scott Carlin, D.O.**
Michael B. Fischer, D.O.**
Frank J. Perrone, D.O.*

* Board Certified in Family Practice
* Board Certified in Internal Medicine
+ Fellow, American Academy of
Disability Evaluating Physicians
~ Associate, American Academy of
Disability Evaluating Physicians

**Bristol Family Practice
& Medical Center**
424 Mill St. at Canal's End Plaza
Bristol, PA 19007
Phone (215) 788-2981
Fax (215) 785-0810

Galloway Medical Center
2171 Galloway Road
Bensalem, PA 19020
Phone (215) 633-1750
Fax (215) 633-1753

**Newtown Family Practice
& Medical Center**
2950 S. Eagle Road
Newtown, PA 18940
Phone (215) 504-9255
Fax (215) 504-9260

Woodbourne Medical Center
447 Woodbourne Road
Langhorne, PA 19047
Phone (267) 852-2110
Fax (267) 852-2114

**Bustleton Family Practice
& Medical Center**
9600 Roosevelt Blvd., Suite 202
Philadelphia, PA 19115
Phone (215) 677-9870
Fax (215) 677-0977

**South Philly Family Practice
& Medical Center**
1800 Jackson Street
Philadelphia, PA 19145
Phone (215) 271-3600
Fax (215) 271-3669

**Bethlehem Family Practice
& Medical Center**
3400 Bath Pike, Suite 203
Bethlehem, PA 18017
Phone (610) 954-8500
Fax (610) 954-8585

WJO, INC. - Business Office
424 Mill St. at Canal's End Plaza
Bristol, PA 19007
Phone (215) 826-8050
Fax (215) 826-8053



The Offices of
Dr. William J. O'Brien III

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Dear Dr. Joseph Gallagher Jr.,

I am writing in support of the proposed regulations for delegated prescriptive authority for physician assistants under the supervision of osteopathic physicians originally published in the Pennsylvania Bulletin on October 20, 2007. As an Osteopathic Physician (DO) supervising a physician assistant (PA) for 8 years, I am confident that a PA has both the knowledge and training to manage prescription medications. Physician assistants have been safely prescribing with the supervision of allopathic (MD) physicians for years. PAs receive the same training regardless of whether they will be supervised by a DO or an MD. PAs continue, as always, to work with physician supervision to ensure patient safety. I believe that Osteopathic Physicians should have the same ability to delegate prescriptive authority to their physician assistants as our allopathic colleagues.

PAs will be more valuable to DOs with prescriptive authority, meaning more practices may hire a PA. This will in turn improve access to care by reducing waiting times, increasing availability of appointments, and allowing the physician more time to focus on more complicated cases. DOs will be more valuable to patients, hospitals, and practices if they are able to supervise PAs with delegated prescriptive authority. Access to care will be improved because PAs who are supervised by DOs will be able to practice to the full extent of their training.

Physicians will decide what medications, if any, their PA will be permitted to prescribe. The regulations should be worded exactly the same as the allopathic regulations to avoid any confusion in clinical practice.

I fully support the proposed regulations to allow osteopathic physicians to delegate prescriptive duties to the PAs they supervise.

Sincerely,

William J. O'Brien III, D.O.

