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Chairman, Osteopathic Board of Medicine
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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

Dear Sir:

I write to you to support the delegation of prescribing authority for all physician assistants in Pennsylvania. It is my understanding there is proposed regulations to allow Osteopathic physicians to enable prescriptive authority to PA's they supervise, just as allopathic physicians currently do. I currently work at Holy Spirit Hospital in Camp Hill, Pa as an Orthopedic Physician Assistant. As part of my responsibility I manage all patients post operatively. The number of patients I provide care to with complete joint replacements is approximately 20-25 on a weekly basis. As you can imagine this is a very important task with many inherent risks for complications. Because of the lack of prescribing authority I have when working under an Osteopathic Physician patient care is substantially impacted. A prime example of this burden occurs when I must contact the DO physician much more frequently to obtain verbal orders for routine matters I otherwise would not have to. This pulls the physician away from their patients with whom they are actively treating and delays treatment for the hospitalized patient.

I feel this is an unnecessary obstacle to great patient care that should not exist. Physician Assistants have been safely prescribing with the supervision of allopathic physicians (MDs) for many years. A physician assistant receives the same training whether I am supervised by a DO or an MD. Why should DO's not have the same prescriptive authority as their MD counterparts?

I would also like to note based on personal experiences that when I was employed by a large orthopedic practice prior to my current hospital based position; I enabled the allopathic supervising doctors I worked with to expand their patient schedules by a full 30% thus enabling many more patients to be seen much sooner in our clinic. I don't believe the same could be said if I worked with a DO as I would have to continually interrupt them for signatures on the required scripts.

I thank you in advance for your consideration in taking the time to review this letter supporting the delegation of prescribing authority for all physician assistants. With these proposed changes made effective as soon as possible, all patients will benefit with better outcomes.

With Best Regards,



Robert Shumaker PA-C
Orthopedic Surgery
Holy Sprit Hospital