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November 8, 2007

Charles Fasano, D.O.
Chairman, Osteopathic Board of Medicine
P.O. Box 2649
Harrisburg, PA 17105-2649

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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

Dear Dr. Fasano,

I am writing to let you know that I fully support the osteopathic prescribing regulations for physician assistants. I am a physician assistant who worked in the Hematology/Oncology setting for five years. I worked in a group practice with nine physicians, two physician assistants and one nurse practitioner. Of the nine physicians, one was an osteopathic physician. The current regulations made it very difficult for the physician assistants to work within our scope of practice to provide the care and necessary treatment for the patients of the osteopathic physician. We were not able to prescribe the many medications necessary to treat the side effects that cancer patients experience from chemotherapy for the osteopathic physician's patients as we were for the allopathic physicians. This created many delays for these very ill patients and unnecessary stress and work for the physician.

I feel that the osteopathic and allopathic regulations should be worded exactly the same to avoid confusion among physician and physician extenders. Physician assistants have been safely prescribing medication across the country for years under the guise of allopathic physicians and would continue to do so for osteopathic physicians. It is unfair to discriminate against the osteopathic physicians. I believe that allowing the osteopathic physicians to have the same authority as the allopathic physicians to delegate prescriptive authority to their physician assistants would increase the level of care to the patients and as well generate more time for the osteopathic physicians to concentrate on more complicated cases. Allowing the physician assistant to have the full ability to perform histories, physical exams and providing a treatment plan which would include prescriptive privileges within his/her scope of practice is the only way to allow all physician and patients the true benefits of having a physician assistant.

I hope that you and the other board members will take my thoughts from personal experience into consideration and approve the proposed regulations in order for physician assistants to prescribe safely under the supervision of the osteopathic physicians. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Ellie Steinruck PA-C