Connecticut Direct Access Law Policy

Connecticut law allows patients in Connecticut to receive physical therapy treatment from an eligible physical therapist at an outpatient rehabilitation provider ("Provider") without a referral ("Direct Access Law"), with some restrictions and exceptions, as set forth below.

In Connecticut, physical therapy treatment may be performed by a licensed physical therapist without an oral or written referral by a person licensed in the state of Connecticut to practice medicine and surgery, podiatry, natureopathy, chiropractic or dentistry, or an advanced practice registered nurse licensed to prescribe in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes Section 20-94a or a physician assistant licensed to prescribe in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes Section 20-12d, provided:

- The licensed physical therapist treating the direct access patient was admitted to a bachelor's degree program prior to January 1, 1998, and has practiced physical therapy for at least four (4) out of the most recent six (6) years of his or her clinical practice, or earned a master's degree or higher in physical therapy from an accredited institution of higher education;

- The licensed physical therapist requires any patient receiving such direct access treatment without an oral or written referral to disclose or affirmatively confirm the identity of such patient's primary care provider or health care provider of record to the Provider upon each initial visit for treatment;

- The licensed physical therapist provides information to any patient seeking such direct access treatment regarding the need to consult with such patient's primary care provider or health care provider of record regarding such patient's underlying medical condition if the condition is prolonged, does not improve within a thirty (30) day period, or continues to require ongoing continuous treatment; and

- The licensed physical therapist refers any patient receiving such direct access treatment to an appropriate licensed practitioner of the healing arts if, upon examination or reexamination, the same condition for which the patient sought physical therapy does not demonstrate objective, measurable, functional improvement in a period of thirty (30) consecutive days or at the end of six (6) visits, whichever is earlier.

EXCEPTION 1: If the outpatient rehabilitation therapy treatment requires a Grade V spinal manipulation, such Grade V spinal manipulation treatment requires (i) a written referral from a person licensed in the state of Connecticut to write referrals (as set forth above) and (ii) shall only be performed by a licensed physical therapist who, in addition to the requirements set forth herein, holds a specialist certification in orthopedic physical therapy from the American Physical Therapy Association or proof of completion of forty (40) hours of course work in manual therapy, including Grade V spinal manipulation.

EXCEPTION 2: If the treatment requested from the Provider involves a work/job related injury, such treatment shall only be performed upon the written referral of a person licensed in the state of Connecticut to write referrals (as set forth above).

NOTE: The patient is responsible for any and all costs associated with the direct access treatment session(s) that are due and owing the Provider and not otherwise covered by the patient's health care plan or insurer.