



# State Medical Board of Ohio

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September 19, 2011

Jimelle Rumberg, Ph.D., CAE  
Executive Director  
Ohio Podiatric Medical Association  
1960 Bethel Road, Suite 140  
Columbus, OH 43220-1815

Dear Dr. Rumberg:

This letter is in response to your message originally sent to Marchelle L. Suppan, D.P.M., President, State Medical Board of Ohio [Medical Board]. Your message forwarded that of Scott L. Haag, J.D., MSPH, Director of the Center for Professional Advocacy & Health Policy & Practice, American Podiatric Medical Association, Inc. Mr. Haag inquires whether it is within the scope of practice of an Ohio licensed podiatric physician to prescribe a pneumatic compression device for the treatment of local manifestations of secondary lymphedema or chronic venous insufficiency with venous stasis ulcers.

The inquiry from Mr. Haag cites as its impetus a draft Local Coverage Determination limiting Medicare coverage for pneumatic compression devices to one or more of the following conditions: the treatment of primary lymphedema or secondary lymphedema caused by one or more of surgery, radiation therapy, trauma, lymphatic obstruction by a tumor, lymphatic filariasis, or chronic venous insufficiency with venous stasis ulcers. The inquiry notes that chronic edema and stasis in and of themselves do not qualify for coverage, and that coverage is allowed only after a prescribed period of conservative therapy is not successful. In addition, the inquiry notes that in the draft the podiatric physician is not recognized as a provider who may prescribe a pneumatic compression device because "management of the systemic intravascular changes and fluid shifts that may be caused by the use of a PCD are beyond their scope of practice."

At its September 15, 2011 meeting, the Medical Board approved the following response:  
The scope of practice of podiatry in Ohio is defined in Section 4731.51, Ohio Revised Code, to include the following:

- The medical, mechanical, and surgical treatment of ailments of the foot, the muscles and tendons of the leg governing the functions of the foot;
- The use of such preparations, medicines, and drugs as may be necessary for the treatment of such ailments; and
- Treatment of local manifestations of systemic diseases as they appear in the hand and foot, but the patient must be concurrently referred to a medical or osteopathic physician for treatment of the systemic disease itself.

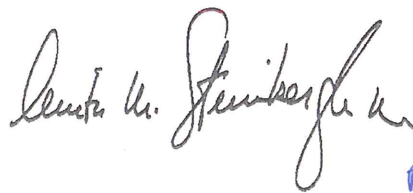
Podiatric medical education and training encompasses the anatomy of the leg and the muscles and tendons of the leg governing the functions of the foot, and the Medical Board recognizes that podiatric physicians play a significant role in the delivery of medical and surgical services for the treatment of foot and ankle pathologies. In the past the Medical Board has responded that the podiatric physician may provide medical and surgical care, as medically appropriate, for the treatment of wounds that are located below the knee.

Consistent with these earlier responses, a podiatric physician may provide acute treatment for a venous stasis ulcer associated with chronic venous insufficiency appearing below the knee. A podiatric physician may also treat the post-operative secondary lymphedema associated with a foot or ankle procedure. Finally, a podiatric physician may prescribe a pneumatic compression device for the treatment of the local manifestations of secondary lymphedema or chronic venous insufficiency with venous stasis ulcers so long as the patient is referred for appropriate medical management for the primary medical condition.

In summary, an Ohio podiatric physician may provide acute or post-operative care for secondary lymphedema associated with a foot or ankle procedure and acute care for a venous stasis ulcer associated with chronic venous insufficiency appearing below the knee. The Ohio podiatric physician may also prescribe a pneumatic compression device for the treatment of secondary lymphedema, including chronic venous insufficiency with venous stasis ulcer so long as the patient is referred for appropriate medical management of the primary medical condition.

Thank you for your inquiry. The Medical Board welcomes comments and inquiries relevant to the practice of podiatry in Ohio. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact Sallie Debolt, General Counsel, at (614) 644-7021.

Sincerely,



Anita M. Steinbergh, D.O.  
Chair, Scope of Practice Committee

Per authorization  
9/15/11 SJD

*This letter is only a guideline and should not be interpreted as being all inclusive or exclusive. The Board will review all possible violations of the Medical Practice Act and/or rules promulgated thereunder on a case by case basis.*