



TO: House Health and Human Services Committee

FROM: Thomas L. Bell
Executive Vice President

RE: SB 529

DATE: March 18, 2004

The Kansas Hospital Association appreciates the opportunity to comment in favor of the provisions of Senate Bill 529. This bill would help clarify state law regarding the ability of physical therapists to receive orders from midlevel practitioners.

Current Kansas law states that a physical therapist may initiate treatment only after consultation with and approval by a physician, dentist, chiropractor or podiatrist. The Board of Healing Arts has interpreted this law to prohibit a physician assistant or advanced registered nurse practitioner from providing the necessary consultation and approval.

The result of the Board's interpretation is that in number Kansas communities, especially those served by critical access hospitals, PAs and ARNPs are prevented from providing the extent of services probably intended by the Legislature. For example, the practice of a PA includes medical services delegated by the responsible physician. PAs practice in a dependent role through delegated authority or written protocol. Prohibiting a PA from making a referral to a physician therapist pursuant to such a protocol is inconsistent with the intent of the statutes.

Passage of SB 529 will help clarify this situation. Thank you for your consideration of our comments. If you would like to discuss this issue further, you may contact our office at 785-233-7436.