

# Rehab Net News Update

R E H A B I L I T A T I O N   N E T W O R K   O F   A R K A N S A S

## Can We Make the Therapy Cap Go Away?

### BECKY'S SCHEDULE

3-2	Comp Day
3-10	ASBCE Hearing
3-12	Rehab Net Board Mtg
3-19	CMSA Meeting
3-24	Office Mgr Meeting

On the first day of the 111 Congress Senator John Ensign (R-Nev.) and Representative Xavier Becerra (D-Calif.) introduced the Medicare Access to Rehabilitation Services Act (S 46/HR 43), which would repeal the Medicare Part B therapy caps. APTA President R. Scott Ward, PT, PhD, stated, "By introducing this legislation, our leaders are sending a clear message that total repeal of the caps is the best long-term solution to ensuring that Medicare beneficiaries receive the rehabilitation services they need.

The Medicare Access to Rehabilitation Services Act introduced by Senators John Ensign (R-NV), Blanche Lincoln (D-AR), Susan Collins (R-ME), and Ben Cardin (D-MD), and Representatives Xavier Becerra (D-CA), Mike Ross (D-AR), and Roy Blunt (R-MO) calls for the repeal of the Medicare therapy caps that limit coverage of outpatient rehabilitation services to \$1,840 for physical therapy and speech language pathology combined and \$1,840 for occupational therapy services.

Sen. Lincoln said, "Therapy caps can preclude seniors from getting the care they need to maintain a healthy quality of life. I will continue my work in the 111th Congress to find a legislative solution so that patients receive the quality care they need without undue burden. As a nation, we have a responsibility to protect and support our seniors, and I remain committed to fighting on their behalf." We are always proud to see our legislators involved in introducing bills that protect our patients and our profession.

As part of the Deficit Reduction Act (DRA), Congress in 2006 passed legislation implementing the therapy caps but authorizing the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to create and employ an exceptions process to permit medically necessary physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech language pathology services above cap levels were such services to meet specified diagnostic and clinical criteria. The exceptions process was extended at the ends of 2006 and 2007, and again in July 2008, when Congress authorized it until December 31, 2009. So, we need to act now to assure that a solution is found before this extension to the exception process ends.

While Senator Lincoln and Representative Ross are already co-sponsoring this bill we need to get Senator Mark Pryor, Representative Marion Berry, Representative John Boozman, and Representative Vic Snyder on Board. Please contact your members of Congress and request they become co-sponsors of this important legislation. Get your Medicare patients involved as well because this affects their quality of care and coverage and eventually it will effect us all as we reach Medicare age or our parents reach Medicare age.

The American Speech-Language Hearing Association, American Occupational Therapy Association and American Physical Therapy Association are all asking their members to get involved and contact their legislators too. "Healthcare reform will be a big issue, but the therapy caps are still a problem," noted Christina Metzler, AOTA chief public affairs officer.

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## CLINICS IN THE SPOTLIGHT



Housley Physical Therapy Services  
942 Hwy 65 North  
Marshall, AR 72650

Susan Housley, PT, is the owner of Housley Physical Therapy in Marshall, AR. She recently moved to a new location at the inpatient rehab wing at Marshall's new Highland Court Nursing and Rehabilitation facility. Susan continues to operate her independent outpatient business while also being onsite to provide inpatient rehab as well.

Housley Physical Therapy Services is able to treat all ages from children to the senior population. Working along side Susan are Kathy Kappus, PTA; Mary Mathis, Rehab Tech; Dona Van Kirk, office manager; Debbie Maverick, receptionist/assistant office manager.

Susan shared with us the story of a 49 year old female who happened to be good friends with the entire staff who had a brain aneurysm which ruptured last spring. It was a life threatening condition. She survived but was left unable to talk or unable to move her entire left side. The staff has been able to participate in her ongoing recovery efforts. She is now able to walk and talk again. Her cognitive status was miraculously unharmed and she is even looking at her options of returning to part-time work status.

Susan states, "We provide all outpatient therapy needs from neck and back problems to orthopedic and neurological problems. We also provide manual therapies including myofascial release, cranio-sacral therapy and lymphatic drainage techniques.



Associates PT & Pain Management  
11900 Kanis Road,  
Suite D-4  
Little Rock, AR  
72211

Nathan Tumilson, MSPT, OCS, and Tommy Bates, MSPT are the owners of Associates Physical Therapy and Pain Management in Little Rock. This last year they relocated two doors down to a larger location so they could expand their gym area and have more office space.

Associates Physical Therapy specializes in orthopedic injuries with a special emphasis on the spine.

Nathan is a board certified clinical specialist in orthopedic physical therapy. Both Nathan and Tommy recently completed their certification in Mechanical Diagnosis and Therapy making them the only clinic in Arkansas with therapists with the MDT certification.

Nathan tells us that, "MDT is the most systematic, reliable, evidence-based approach available and it has revolutionized our practice of physical therapy."

Tommy says that they currently have the most professional and reliable staff ever headed up by Amy Bridges, office manager, and supported by Dee Dee Sebren and Phyllis Crudup, front desk.



**Happy  
St.  
Patrick's  
Day**



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**Letter From the Editor**

Feb. 28th was our Spring course and Business meeting and we had the best turnout ever with 102 people registered for the course and 87 of those were from our member clinics.

Our Fall meeting will be in conjunction with the Arkansas Physical Therapy Association. We are looking forward to working with them on that. As soon as we have confirmed our speaker and topic I will let you all know.

The Board of Directors would like your help in recruiting new members. If you know of a private practice clinic that you think would make a good member we encourage you to talk to them about Rehab Net and the benefits you receive. Feel free to give them my contact information and direct them to our website, [www.rehabnet-ar.com](http://www.rehabnet-ar.com) to learn more about us. Also, please send me their contact info so one of our Board members or I can follow up with them.



Rehab Net Treasurer, Gabe Freyaldenhoven, has a new addition to the family. Please welcome future physical therapist, Madison Grace Freyaldenhoven. She was born on Feb. 19, 2009. Gabe and his wife are very proud of their new daughter and we send out our congratulations to the new parents.

**Office Manager's Network**

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# REHAB NET

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## Legislative Update

The Physical Therapy Board will be presenting its practice act clean up bill in the next upcoming weeks. There is nothing major in this bill. It only serves to clean up the language. While this bill will be coming from the board, not Rehab Net, Rehab Net lobbyists will be watching this bill carefully and will provide support if needed.

HB1162 is a bill filed by Rep. Beverly Pyle that will abolish the massage therapy board and put massage therapy back under the direction of the department of health. This bill is in response to SB89, a bill filed by Sen. Terry Smith that allows massage therapists to do all kinds of things, including mobilization. Pyle feels that the board is playing favorites. She has not indicated when she will run the bill.

SB89 is the massage therapy bill filed by Sen. Terry Smith. He has not indicated that he intends to run this bill, but it has not been pulled down yet, which means he can still run it. This is a very dangerous bill which almost doubles the size of the massage therapy practice act and allows them to perform techniques previously held by physical therapists. Plain and simple, this bill allows massage therapists to perform several functions that are performed by physical therapists.

Specifically, SB 89 makes the following changes:

- ◆ rewords the definition of massage therapy to read, "Massage Therapy means the assessment, mobilization, and treatment of soft tissue which may include skin, fascia, tendons, ligaments, and muscles and their dysfunctions for therapeutic purposes of establishing and maintaining good physical condition, comfort, relief of pain or injury."
- ◆ clarifies the definition of a massage therapy instructor
- ◆ increases the per diem for board members from \$50 to \$60.
- ◆ allows the board to require that all applicants undergo a criminal background check
- ◆ raises registration fee, license fee, renewal fee, examination fee
- ◆ raises the fee for establishing a massage therapy school to \$1250 and initial inspection fee to \$150 and annual renewal and inspection fee to \$150

SB89 has an emergency clause on it, which means it will go into affect the moment the governor signs the bill. It makes no sense for this bill to have an emergency clause.

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