



TALKING POINTS FOR MANIPULATION

- Evidence-based medicine shows that spinal manipulation for a select group of patients with sub-acute low back pain and neck pain is a *beneficial and cost-effective treatment*. The majority of these studies were performed by physical therapists.
- Patients and our health care system overall will save money in their healthcare treatment. It is costly, both in time and money, to seek treatment from two providers when only one is necessary.
- In 1999, the Department of Health conducted a sunrise review, which concluded that physical therapists should be able to perform spinal manipulation. The Department recommended an endorsement process whereby education and competency are demonstrated. Physical therapists could perform spinal manipulation techniques in Washington prior to the prohibition enacted in 1983.
- All three of the physical therapy schools in Washington (University of Puget Sound, University of Washington, and Eastern Washington University) teach spinal manipulation to their students. In fact, these schools *must* teach spinal manipulation to remain accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Physical Therapy Education. All students of these programs graduate with a clinical Doctorate of Physical Therapy degree.
- Washington taxpayers are supporting the state-funded education of physical therapy students who learn, but aren't allowed to use, spinal manipulation techniques.
- Many Washington PT school graduates leave our state because of the spinal manipulation prohibition, because of concern that they *can't practice with evidence-based best standards of care*. This exacerbates the current PT shortage in our state and is a waste of the taxpayer dollars spent on supporting their education.
- In addition, many potential students have rejected acceptance into our PT programs, because they can't practice spinal manipulation techniques in Washington state.
- The PT shortage is further exacerbated, because many therapists refuse to move here. The prohibition on spinal manipulation prevents them from providing best practice.
- For over 70 years, physical therapists have been educated and trained to practice manual therapy, including spinal manipulation techniques. In fact, the literature supporting the use of manipulation by physical therapists dates back to 1925.
- Physical therapists have a long history of safely providing manual therapy including spinal manipulation techniques without adverse affects.
- Physical therapists may use manipulation techniques on all joints *except* joints located in the spine. It does not make sense to limit use of manipulation techniques to only certain parts of the body.
- Washington is one of two states that prohibit physical therapists from performing spinal manipulation by statute. The other state is Arkansas.