

SB 957 & 967 (Tomlinson) Athletic Training Licensure

This legislation is needed to establish licensure for Athletic Trainers (ATs) in Pennsylvania to best protect the public. This legislation has been introduced by Senator Tomlinson. Licensure is regarded as the highest form of regulation and would benefit offer the greatest protection afforded to the general public of Pennsylvania.

Athletic Trainers working in the Commonwealth care for and enhance the health and welfare of our clients through prevention, recognition, management, and rehabilitation of injuries. There are approximately 3000 Certified Athletic Trainers practicing in Pennsylvania which is currently the largest number of ATs of any state in the nation. Further, Pennsylvania boasts one of the highest numbers of accredited Athletic Training Education Programs in the nation (20).

Athletic Training is recognized by the American Medical Association as an allied health care profession. Further, ATs are recognized in the Pennsylvania Medical Practice Act (of 1985) which is the law that relates to practicing medicine in PA in Section 51.1.

Athletic Training remains the only health care provider group who is “certified” and not “licensed” under the Pennsylvania State Boards of Medicine and Osteopathic Medicine. Currently there are 39 states that regulate athletic trainers through licensure in the nation. In fact, Pennsylvania is 1 of only 5 states to be regulated through certification.

HB 209 (Briggs) and SB 209 (White); Pennsylvania Equity in Interscholastic Sports Disclosure Act

Athletic Trainers (ATs) collaborate with physicians to provide cost effective medical care and optimize the health and safety of interscholastic athletes on a daily basis. The Act would require schools to annually disclose their athletic training facilities, medical equipment and supplies, the number of athletic trainers (ATs) and the time ATs spend with each team. HB 209 and SB 290 would help assure all teams have access to the necessary medical personnel and equipment.

HB 200 (Briggs) and SB 200 (Browne); The Safety in Youth Sports Acts

House Bill 200 and Senate Bill 200 are designed to improve concussion management in youth sports especially in the instances where athletic training coverage is not provided on site and to increase awareness regarding the devastating, life-long effects caused when not handled properly.

Athletic training is a profession that includes substantial education in the prevention, evaluation and treatment of concussions. Athletic trainers employed by school districts across the Commonwealth provide care to interscholastic athletes with concussions on

a daily basis. The bill is designed to improve concussion management in youth sports, especially in the instances where athletic training services are not provided on site. SB 200 also will increase awareness regarding the devastating, life-long effects caused when not handled properly.

The legislation would require that if a high school or junior high school athlete sustains a concussion or brain injury they could not return to play unless cleared by a medical professional properly trained in concussion management. Additionally, the Act would require an athlete and their parent or guardian to annually sign a concussion and head injury information sheet prior to the student's participating in practice or competition. The concussion legislation would require coaches to complete a concussion certification course. The bill would also encourage schools to hold concussion information meetings for students and parents prior to the beginning of a season.

Act 110; The Health Care Identification Badges Act.

Recently, House Bill 1482, was signed into law as Act 110; The Health Care Identification Badges Act. The Act amends the Health Care Facilities Act to require the Department of Health to promulgate regulations requiring employees of health care facilities, health care providers and physicians' private practices who deliver direct care to consumers to wear photo identification tags when working.

PATS has sent a letter to the Department of Health during the process of regulation writing of Act 110 and asked the Department of Health to consider the title designation "Athletic Trainer" on the badge for an AT.

PATS feels Athletic Trainers (ATs) should be recognized as health care professionals. ATs are recognized in the Medical Practice Act (of 1985) and fall under the State Board of Medicine and the State Board of Osteopathic Medicine. ATs often provide direct care to patients in the schools' healthcare facility (i.e. athletic training rooms) or on-site during practices and competitions and should be considered amongst other comparison health care professionals.

While having an AT wear an identification badge at their place of employment may not be necessary, an AT providing care outside of their school, for example at Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association Championships, the identification badge would allow ATs to be easily identifiable in emergency situations and assuring that only qualified individuals are providing care.