

**From:** [Kathy Arney](#)  
**To:** "E Windsor"  
**Cc:** [Deborah J. Ragan](#); [Kathy Arney](#)  
**Subject:** RE: NC PTA Scope of Practice  
**Date:** Tuesday, December 15, 2020 7:37:59 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)  
[image004.png](#)

Ms. Windsor,

At its meeting on December 9, 2020, the Board considered your question regarding PTA performance of manual lumbar traction of the spine using a mobilization belt. The standard for making this determination is contained in Board Rule 48C .0101 (a) Permitted Practice, which states, "Physical therapy is presumed to include any acts, test, procedures, modalities, treatments, or interventions that are **routinely** taught in educational programs, **or** in continuing education programs for physical therapists and are **routinely** performed in practice settings." After review of the information available on this topic and discussion by the Board, the Board determined that that the standards of Board Rule 48C .0101 (a) are not met at this time at this time. Therefore, the use of manual lumbar traction is not currently within the scope of practice for the PTA in North Carolina.

If new or additional information is provided to the Board regarding where this is taught in entry-level or continuing education and is routinely practiced by physical therapists, it will review the new information and make a determination. Please contact me if we can provide additional information or clarification.

Kathy

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**From:** Kathy Arney <[karney@ncptboard.org](mailto:karney@ncptboard.org)>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 29, 2020 1:30 PM  
**To:** 'E Windsor' <[ewindsor@synergypnc.com](mailto:ewindsor@synergypnc.com)>  
**Cc:** Kathy Arney <[karney@ncptboard.org](mailto:karney@ncptboard.org)>; Deborah J. Ragan <[dragan@ncptboard.org](mailto:dragan@ncptboard.org)>  
**Subject:** RE: NC PTA Scope of Practice

Ms. Windsor,

In response to your emailed follow up question to the NC Board of PT Examiners, in order for the Board to consider your question at one of it's meeting, the following information will be required to be provided by you for the Board's consideration.

The Board is required to make determinations regarding scope of practice in context of the following Board rule:

**SUBCHAPTER 48C - SCOPE OF PHYSICAL THERAPY PRACTICE**

**SECTION .0100 - PHYSICAL THERAPISTS**

**21 NCAC 48C .0101 PERMITTED PRACTICE**

(a) Physical therapy is presumed to include any acts, tests, procedures, modalities, treatments, or interventions that are routinely taught in educational programs or in continuing education programs for physical therapists and are routinely performed in practice settings.

(b) A physical therapist who employs acts, tests, procedures, modalities, treatments, or interventions in which professional training has been received through education or experience is considered to be engaged in the practice of physical therapy.

(c) A physical therapist must supervise physical therapist assistants, physical therapy aides, PT students and PTA students to the extent required under the Physical Therapy Practice Act and the rules in this Chapter. Physical therapy aides include all non-licensed individuals aiding in the provision of physical therapy services.

The Board will need to know where the techniques you are asking about are taught in PTA academic educational programs in NC, routinely taught in continuing educational programs to PTA's and routinely performed in practice by PTA's. Other information may be beneficial; however, without those pieces of information the Board will not be able to make a determination. If it is useful to you, there is a list of the NC PT/PTA programs on the Board's website under Links, which is accessible to the public for use. Please let me know if you have additional question. Kathy

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**From:** E Windsor <[ewindsor@synergypnc.com](mailto:ewindsor@synergypnc.com)>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 29, 2020 12:29 PM  
**To:** Kathy Arney <[karney@ncptboard.org](mailto:karney@ncptboard.org)>  
**Subject:** Re: NC PTA Scope of Practice

Hi Kathy,

Thank you so much for your response clarifying the stance regarding METs. To gain further clarification for the lumbar spinal traction technique, do I need to send a different request to have it addressed by the Board?

Best Regards,

**Elizabeth Windsor, PT, DPT**

**Physical Therapist Supervisor**

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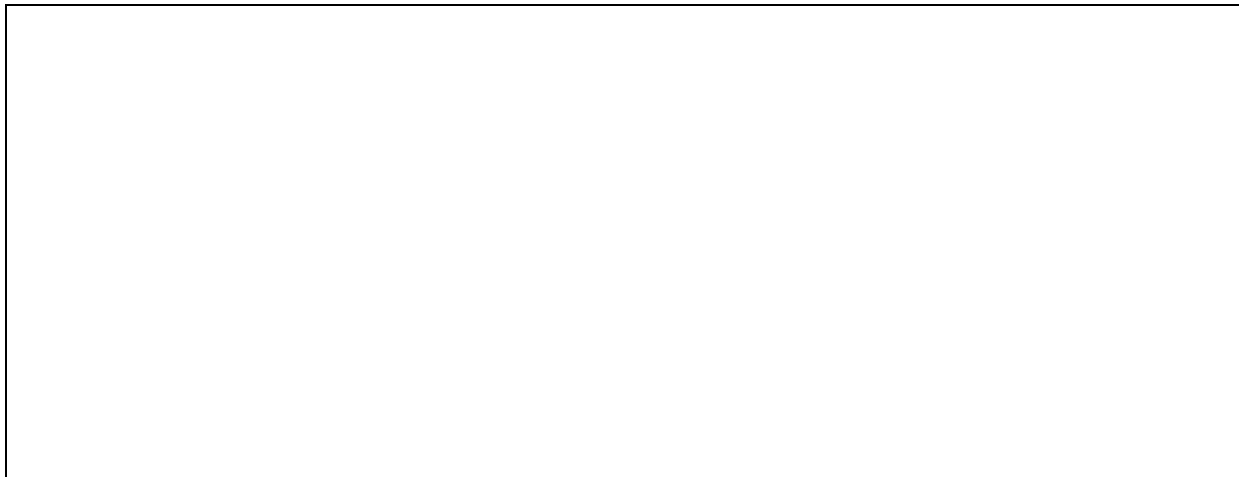


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**From:** Kathy Arney <[karney@ncptboard.org](mailto:karney@ncptboard.org)>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 22, 2020 7:36 AM  
**To:** E Windsor <[ewindsor@synergypnc.com](mailto:ewindsor@synergypnc.com)>  
**Cc:** Kathy Arney <[karney@ncptboard.org](mailto:karney@ncptboard.org)>  
**Subject:** RE: NC PTA Scope of Practice

Ms. Windsor,

In response to your emailed question to the NC Board of PT Examiners, I have provide the response by the Board to a similar question posed in 2013:



Dear Mr. Lehman, In response to your email below, the Board discussed this issue at a Board Meeting on March 7, 2013. The Board determined that Muscle Energy Techniques that involve the spinal muscles are designed to mobilize the spine and may also mobilize the sacrum, and, as such, should not be performed by PTA's as this would be a form of spinal mobilization. This position is consistent with the Q & A question that was printed in the last issue of the Board's Newsletter. (See below) Please do not hesitate to contact me again if I can be of further assistance. BFM

NCBPTE Newsletter, Issue 44, Oct 2012

Q: "Is Trager technique an appropriate massage technique to be teaching our PTA students?"

A: The Board determined that Trager techniques that involve the spine should not be performed by PTA's as they are a form of spinal mobilization. Trager techniques that involve the shoulders, hips, arms, and legs would be permitted if the PTA has advanced training and is competent to perform extremity mobilization and Trager techniques.

Lumbar spinal traction was not addressed directly in this response; it would need to be addressed by the Board prior to me providing a response that it "would not be a violation" of either the NC PT Practice Act or Board rules. If you have additional questions, please don't hesitate to contact me. Kathy

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**From:** E Windsor <[ewindsor@synergypntnc.com](mailto:ewindsor@synergypntnc.com)>  
**Sent:** Friday, June 19, 2020 1:55 PM  
**To:** Kathy Arney <[karney@ncptboard.org](mailto:karney@ncptboard.org)>  
**Subject:** NC PTA Scope of Practice

Hi Kathy,

I am a PT at a clinic in Jacksonville, NC and was hoping you would be able to help our clinic clarify a few questions. We recently began incorporating PTA's into our practice and some questions have been raised regarding PTA performance of METs. Our PTs often use muscle energy techniques for treatment of rib, spinal, and SI joint dysfunction. As these techniques are not direct pressure to the spinal column would they be considered still mobilizations and prohibited for PTA performance, or to be performed based of judgement of the PT and the training of the PTA? In the same line of thought we also perform manual lumbar spine traction using a mobilization belt. I know that the board considers manual cervical traction appropriate for PTA performance, would this form of lumbar traction be included as well?

Thank you for taking time to review these questions and assist. Please let me know if there is any further clarification I can provide on my end. Have a great weekend!

Best Regards,

**Elizabeth Windsor, PT, DPT**

**Physical Therapist Supervisor**  
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