

# American Physical Therapy Association

1190 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.

MEMO To: Mr. William Noell, Secretary  
Maryland Chapter

Date: October 20, 1953

Re:

From: Mildred Elson  
Executive Director

Miss Haskell has told me of her recent conversation with Mrs. Kendall in regard to a letter she had received from the Registry.

According to our information the new Code of Ethics of the Registry is still in preparation. There is no doubt that it will spell out quite clearly that the maintenance of a private office by a physical therapist is unethical. As you no doubt know the Registry has always stated that, but ~~discovered that~~ there were loopholes which it now proposes to close.

I would like to emphasize that the American Registry of Physical Therapists is a voluntary non-profit corporation, just as the American Physical Therapy Association is a non-profit corporation. Each have their own by-laws and code of ethics which members or registrants must abide by if they are to maintain their registration and/or membership.

A great many American Physical Therapy Association members are registered with the American Registry for Physical Therapists and many registrants are American Physical Therapy Association members. Whereas both organizations have in common maintenance of standards of physical therapy education and service they are in fact quite dissimilar.

We are a professional membership association with by-laws and code of ethics voted on by the membership, thru their duly elected delegates to the legislative body, the House of Delegates. Our purposes are broad and services many and all subject to membership approval.

The Registry is governed by an appointed Board which has full autonomy. Seven are physicians appointed by the Congress of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation and two physical therapists appointed by the American Physical Therapy Association. Provision for the latter representation was made two years ago. It acts in a similar capacity to a state registration or licensing board except it has no legal authority. Registrants to **maintain status must abide** by the by-laws and ethical laws of the Board, **otherwise they are subject to discipline or expulsion.**

The American Physical Therapy Association, as you know, is deeply concerned with ethical practice, i.e., that we treat only by prescription and under the direction of a physician and this is spelled out in our code. Any member not adhering to it is subject to discipline.

We as an Association are not in agreement with the concept that the maintenance of a private office or owning equipment is in itself unethical, but rather how does the physical therapist conduct himself. However the registry does maintain it is unethical.

There is in my mind only two things to do, one, resign from the Registry if you are in disagreement with its policies and purposes and two,

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if you believe that the Registry is important to you protest as a registrant, not as an American Physical Therapy Association member, to the Board.

I'll be happy to talk with the group there. I could do it sometime the first week in November or sometime the week of the 22nd.