

West Virginia Board of Occupational Therapy



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State of West Virginia
Office of the Attorney General
Charleston, WV 25305

The West Virginia Board of Occupational Therapy commends the recent release of the best practices initiative and other measures to reduce prescription drug abuse by Attorney General Morrissey. We appreciate the opportunity to be involved in this important effort to reduce the misuse and abuse of prescription drugs in West Virginia.

We are pleased that the Attorney General is reaching out to various medical disciplines to provide an interdisciplinary approach to dealing with this issue. Although Occupational Therapists are not involved in prescribing or dispensing prescription medication, we believe the practice of occupational therapy can play a role in supporting the goal of increasing the use of non-opioid alternatives to reduce suffering and improve function for patients dealing with pain.

One of the recommendations in the Best Practices is to implement a tiered approach for prescribing opioids for pain and take every possible step to utilize non-opioid options first, with prescribers encouraged to discuss alternative approaches to opioid treatment. Occupational Therapy can be a core component of an interdisciplinary approach to pain management. Occupational Therapy focuses on client-centered care, assesses specific performance problems in daily living, and provides therapeutic interventions through education, functional goal setting, and training to promote optimal independence. A few examples of specific interventions offered by occupational therapy include the use of modalities such as heat and cold to help in pain control, safe body mechanics and ergonomic design, neuromuscular re-education, use of pacing during functional activities, use of adaptive equipment to assist in daily living activities, and guided imagery for relaxation techniques.

We look forward to working with the Attorney General's office as this important initiative moves forward.

Sincerely,

Kathy F. Quesenberry, MSM, OTR/L

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Chairperson, WV Board of Occupational Therapy