



**AOPT – Chapter Grant: Colorado 2017 – Dry Needling
and the Physical Therapist Scope of Practice.**

The Colorado Chapter of APTA engaged an Advocacy grant in 2017 from the Orthopaedic Section (now the Academy of Orthopaedic Physical Therapy) to assist in the legal expenses and regulatory expenses associated with ability of physical therapists to utilize dry needling in practice in Colorado.

The effort to defend the right of physical therapists to utilize dry needling within the scope of PT practice in Colorado at the time was ongoing and facing legal challenges and regulatory challenges. Lawsuits had been filed against the Physical Therapy Board in Colorado for allowing physical therapists to utilize dry needling based upon “mechanical stimulation” in the Practice Act and the development of Rule 211 – Dry Needling in 2011.

Throughout 2018, under the Sunset review process for the Physical Therapist Practice Act, and in parallel with the ongoing legal battles confronting the PT Board, APTA CO defended both legally and regulatorily the right of physical therapists to utilize dry needling. Ultimately the lawsuits were dismissed, and the practice act was updated to included the use of dry needling in multiple areas of the act. Finally, in May 2019 the PT Rules were updated with a revised version of Rule 211 which affirmed fully the ability of appropriately trained physical therapists to utilize dry needling and extended this authority to student physical therapists under direct supervision.

The support of the Academy of Orthopaedic Physical Therapy in providing an advocacy grant was essential in ensuring the appropriate legal and lobbying expertise to defend and ultimately modernize the scope of physical therapist practice in Colorado for the health benefit of society.

Respectfully,

Cameron W. MacDonald
APTA CO President – 8/3/20