

This amendment to 16.20.13 NMAC, Sections 7 and 8, effective 2/24/2026

16.20.13.7 DEFINITIONS:

A. “Dry needling” is defined as a skilled technique performed by a physical therapist using filiform needles to penetrate the skin or underlying tissues or both to effect change in body structures and functions for the evaluation and management of neuromusculoskeletal conditions, pain, movement impairments, functional limitations and disability.

B. “High risk areas” are defined as any area that the physical therapist has not been formally trained to needle, via a New Mexico American Physical Therapy Association (NMAPTA) board approved course.

[16.20.13.7 NMAC - N, 7/28/2019; A, 2/24/2026]

16.20.13.8 REQUIREMENTS FOR PHYSICAL THERAPIST TO PROVIDE DRY NEEDLING

A. Dry needling may be performed by a physical therapist who meets the following requirements:

(1) the physical therapist must complete and maintain documentation of a board approved or New Mexico American Physical Therapy Association (NMAPTA) dry needling course that includes, but is not limited to, training in indications, contraindications, potential risks, proper hygiene, proper use and disposal of needles, and appropriate selection of clients.

(2) the physical therapist must complete a minimum of 24 hours of a dry needling course, with both a written and practical (in-person) training.

(3) dry needling in a high-risk area, without formal training, is not to be performed until the physical therapist has received appropriate training.

(4) a licensed physical therapist must have at least 6 months of experience~~[as a licensed physical therapist before providing]~~ before administering dry needling to any patients.

(5) the physical therapist bears the burden of proof of sufficient education and training to ensure competence. If requested by the board or a member of the public, the physical therapist practicing dry needling shall provide documentation of completion of the training required by this regulation. Failure to provide written document to the board of meeting the training requirement shall be deemed prima facie evidence that the physical therapist is not competent and shall not be permitted to perform dry needling.

B. Dry needling shall only be performed by a competent and licensed physical therapist and may not be delegated to a physical therapist assistant, or student, aide or assistive personnel.

~~[C. — Gradual implementation of this dry needling provision (16.20.13.8 NMAC) will allow all physical therapists who are currently practicing dry needling to continue while they submit the required documentation during the 2019–2020 licensing renewal period. The transition period will be completed by 2021. All physical therapists practicing dry needling thereafter, will be required to follow the provision outlined in this document, prior to implementing this treatment technique on patients.]~~

[16.20.13 NMAC - N, 7/28/2019; A, 2/24/2026]