
OLR Bill Analysis**sSB 1052*****AN ACT CONCERNING THE PRACTICE OF ACUPUNCTURE.*****SUMMARY:**

This bill expands the scope of practice of licensed acupuncturists. It defines the “practice of acupuncture” as the system of restoring and maintaining health by classical and modern Oriental medicine principles and methods of assessing, treating, and preventing diseases, disorders, and dysfunctions of the body; injury; pain; and other conditions.

Current law defines acupuncture as treatment by mechanical, thermal, or electrical stimulation through inserting needles or by applying heat, pressure, or electrical stimulation at one or more points on the body to achieve therapeutic or prophylactic effect. The practitioner must select the points on the body based on the theory of the physiological interrelationship of body organs with an associated point for diseases, disorders, and dysfunctions of the body. It does not include physical therapy.

It also makes technical and conforming changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2011

SCOPE OF PRACTICE

The bill expands the statutory definition of the practice of acupuncture to include the (1) development of a comprehensive treatment plan; (2) modulation, restoration, promotion, and maintenance of normal function in and between the energetic and organ systems and bodily functions; and (3) other practices consistent with recognized standards of the acupuncture and Oriental medicine profession and accepted by the National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine.

Development of a Comprehensive Treatment Plan

Under the bill, the practice of acupuncture includes the development of a comprehensive treatment plan according to acupuncture and Oriental medicine theory, including:

1. assessment of body function by pulse, palpitation, physiological observation, and patient interview and history, to identify patterns and differentiate, categorize, and evaluate signs and symptoms;
2. selection of treatment strategies and modalities to address chief complaints, connected symptoms, and underlying syndromes; and
3. evaluation of treatment outcomes, review of patient progress and diagnostic results, adjustment of treatment strategies and modalities, and health care provider referrals.

Modulation and Restoration of Normal Body Functions

The practice of acupuncture also includes modulation and restoration of normal function in and between the body's energetic and organ systems and biochemical, metabolic, and circulation functions using one or more of the following:

1. stimulation of selected points by (a) inserting needles, including trigger point, subcutaneous, and dry needling, and intramuscular stimulation; (b) applying cold therapy or heat therapy, such as moxibustion; or (c) acupressure using manual, magnetic, low-level light laser therapy (wavelengths between 600 and 1,000 nanometers) or electrical stimulation;
2. stimulation of selected locations by manually applying tissue or muscle pressure or stretching (known as "tui na"); and
3. stimulation of selected skin locations identified with internal stagnation by cupping or a friction technique known as "gua sha."

Promotion and Maintenance of Normal Body Functions

Accupuncture also includes the promotion and maintenance of normal function in the body's energetic and organ systems and biochemical, metabolic, and circulation functions by:

1. recommending Oriental dietary principals, including using herbal and other supplements according to Oriental medicine theory;
2. patient education on Oriental medicine theory, healing process, and progression; and
3. lifestyle recommendations and self-treatment techniques including Oriental exercise and body mechanics (i.e., "tai chi" and "qi going"), relaxation, breathing, and meditation.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Public Health Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 28 Nay 0 (04/01/2011)