

ALASKA BOARD OF CHIROPRACTIC EXAMINERS POSITION STATEMENT: ANCILLARY THERAPIES

Date: 10/02/2014

Status: New

Organized by: Alaska Board of Chiropractic Examiners

Adopted by: Alaska Board of Chiropractic Examiners

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this statement is to oppose any health insurance company's policy of requiring the application of ancillary therapies in a chiropractic office to be performed by the chiropractor when properly trained personnel under the chiropractor's direction and control are employed to perform the required service. Ancillary therapies include, but are not limited to: massage, myofascial release, ultrasound, electric muscle stimulation, application of cryotherapy or hot fomentations and traction.

STATEMENT:

The ABOCE opposes the limitation of insurance benefits for ancillary therapies if the service is stipulated to be only performed by the chiropractor. Like physical therapists, chiropractors are authorized to employ assistants to perform ancillary duties when the therapist is under their direct supervision.

HISTORY:

This year, the plan manager of a health insurance company doing business in Alaska discovered that chiropractors were billing for massage benefits when the therapy was done by others beside the chiropractors, evoking an email "alert" by the Alaska Chiropractic Society on March 22, 2013 to inform members of the ACS of this concern. Chiropractic offices since then complain that when representatives of this company were called for verification of benefits for patients, they were told that massage was a covered benefit. The caveat of who may perform the service was not made clear. This insurance company is asking for chiropractic offices for voluntary "self audits" and recoupment of paid claims.

SUPPORTIVE MATERIAL:

Per plan rules (i.e. Federal Blue Cross rule on massage benefits).

SUMMARY:

The ABOCE feels that it is appropriate for the Board to comment on insurance policies which it feels may be misleading, discriminatory or grossly unfair to chiropractors or the patients they serve, and could be misleading and ripe for abuse by mistake or purpose.