

Please support clear standards of practice for safer patient care

An Act Relative to Safer Treatment for Pain (H2270/S1355)

H2270/S1355, filed by Senator Julian Cyr and Representative Jon Santiago, is legislation that would ensure that those providing pain treatment with filiform (acupuncture) needles are properly licensed and trained. It requires licensed health care providers to be adequately trained and independently tested to validate their skills.

Patients shouldn't bear the burden of figuring out whether their provider is regulated or licensed to perform a procedure. It is not the patient's job to determine whether or not their provider is licensed or regulated to perform procedures — that is the job of the Commonwealth.

Patients are misled when told by a provider that they are practicing within their licensed scope, yet they either are not or are operating in some grey area. To be clear, Massachusetts statute only explicitly allows Licensed Acupuncturists or MDs to insert acupuncture needles for orthopedic or other purposes.

This bill clarifies the law and protects consumers by guaranteeing that anyone inserting dry/filiform/acupuncture needles has been appropriately trained, vetted and examined to do so.

No one performs surgery without a license to do so. Similarly, no one legally practices acupuncture without an acupuncture license or MD in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Dry needling is acupuncture. The fact that public and private insurers use the same code (CMS/CPT code 20561/20562) for both for dry needling and trigger point acupuncture demonstrates that our health care system recognizes this.

Inaction is an act. Choosing NOT to act while patients and providers alike are being misled to believe a procedure is legal or in scope is a failure of leadership.

H2270/S1355 clarifies a specific training and evaluation criteria for orthopedic dry needling/acupuncture which would remedy the above concerns.

Please support H2270/S1355 — An Act Relative to Safer Treatment for Pain. Contact Chair Marjorie Decker and Chair Julian Cyr to request a quick, favorable report from the Joint Committee on Public Health.

