Direct access and
Advanced Scope of Practice
in Physical Therapy

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National health insurance in Germany

Available for all citizens regardless of income, social status, and place of residence.
National health insurance in Germany

Pillars of the health service

- solidarity
- subsidiary
National health insurance in Germany

Subsidiary principle

Self-administration
National health insurance in Germany

Self - administration

- Health insurance providers
- Health care professions
- Hospitals
- Professional organisations
National health insurance in Germany

90% of Germans have national health insurance

10% have private medical insurance
National health insurance in Germany

Insurance is solidarity-based financed

For employees, i.e. those members of society employed, the contributions are covered half each by the employer and employee
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Services are mainly available in the form of benefits

Physiotherapists, receive payment directly from the national health insurance provider
National health insurance in Germany

Out-patient healthcare for patients is primarily carried out by private practitioners

18,000 registered physiotherapists as private practitioners in Germany
National health insurance in Germany

Services carried out by physiotherapists and charged to the national health insurance providers are contained in the so-called cure and medicine guidelines.
In accordance with the subsidiary principle, these guidelines are drafted within the context of the self-administration
National health insurance in Germany

The responsible professional associations must be involved in the drafting of these guidelines.
National health insurance in Germany

Physiotherapists must be registered

National health insurance providers sign general agreements for the uniform provision of these services
The professional association is, through the agreements, involved in ensuring the provision of physiotherapy services within the health service.
This is a considerable contributing factor towards ensuring proper service provision for national health insurance members.
Direct access in Germany

Furnishing curative services requires a medical prescription

Social health insurance legislation only grants the right to direct access to physiotherapists in the context of prevention services
Direct access in Germany

It is the decision of the medical practitioner, whether he/she prescribes the individual measure or leaves the decision concerning the treatment measure to the physiotherapist on the basis of his/her indication.
Physiotherapists have filed lawsuits at various Administrative Courts

Achieving approval of direct access
Direct access in Germany

The court rulings differ from one another

The Federal Administrative Court has now ruled conditions who must be fulfilled for approval of direct access
The physiotherapist must undergo a limited examination of his/her knowledge, in order to commence activities without a medical prescription.
Direct access in Germany

The examination should enable the physiotherapist to recognise and consider the possibilities and limits of his/her own diagnostic abilities.
Direct access in Germany

Vocational and legal knowledge including the legal limitations of non-medical practice of medicine must be proven.
Neither physiotherapeutic contents and treatment methods nor knowledge and skills for medical differential diagnostics should be part of the future examination.
Direct access in Germany

Amendment to the social legislation

Conclude contracts with the health insurance providers

Physiotherapists can be granted more autonomy of action
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Medical practitioner only indicates the need for physiotherapy

The physiotherapist decides independently on the therapy management
Direct access in Germany

A first model for the treatment of non-specific back pain was started on September 01, 2009

We will continue to present our demand for unrestricted direct access
National health insurance in Germany

Thank you for your attention