



Commission on Accreditation
of Athletic Training Education

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Dear Program Directors, Chairs and Deans

Over the past few years, there have been many reported instances of athletic training students providing patient care unsupervised, whether traveling with athletic teams or providing medical coverage at practices and games. Please see the joint statement (below) released by the CAATE, the NATA and the BOC concerning supervision of athletic training students.

Strategic Alliance Statement on Athletic Training Student Supervision

The leadership of the Strategic Alliance, which includes the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE), the National Athletic Trainers' Association (NATA), and the Board of Certification, Inc. (BOC), has concluded that it is both appropriate and necessary to issue this formal statement to remind institutions, supervisors and students that athletic training students should provide services to patients only when directly supervised by the appropriate personnel. This includes athletic training students who travel with athletic teams.

According to the *2008 Standards for the Accreditation of Entry-Level Athletic Training Education Programs*, "an approved clinical instructor or clinical instructor must be physically present and have the ability to intervene on behalf of the athletic training student to provide on-going and consistent education."

The Strategic Alliance has a vested interest in student supervision, an issue that transcends educational programs and impacts the profession of athletic training as a whole. The CAATE is involved from an educational standpoint, the BOC is involved from the regulatory perspective, and the NATA is concerned about issues affecting the athletic training profession.

Athletic training services should be provided only by BOC-certified or otherwise regulated personnel or by students under the direct supervision of such personnel. Athletic training students should only travel with teams when directly supervised at all times by appropriately credentialed athletic trainers. The practice of an unsupervised student providing athletic training services replaces licensed athletic training staff with unregulated personnel. This is illegal in most states, and the practice is contrary to the safety and welfare of patients. Additionally, it is not in the best interests of the profession and therefore cannot be supported by the Strategic Alliance.

The direct supervision of athletic training students is in the best interest of the institutions, supervisors, students, and patients. It is required under the CAATE education standards. As stated above, the

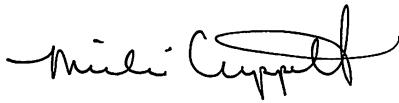
Standards stipulate a clinical instructor must be physically present and able to interact with an athletic training student at the site of the clinical experience.

The Strategic Alliance acknowledges that critical thinking and independent clinical decision-making are at the heart of good clinical supervision. Direct supervision does not preclude students' ability to learn and exercise those key skills. Clinical instructors and supervisors should allow students the appropriate freedom to engage in critical thinking and decision-making in a suitable environment. Above all, supervision by an instructor or supervisor must be adequate to ensure that each patient receives competent and quality care and to ensure compliance with the relevant state practice act. Failure to provide adequate supervision could expose the institution and regulated professionals to liability.

The Strategic Alliance is evaluating clinical education from several perspectives and is developing additional models and tools. This collective effort will assist athletic training students and classroom and clinical instructors.

We encourage program personnel to pass this information along to all clinical instructors who supervise the athletic training students at their institution. The CAATE will be offering numerous workshops and open forums throughout 2012 in order to assist program administrators with techniques and tools to ensure quality education and compliance with the *Standards*. These informational sessions will be held at district meetings, the SEATA Educator's Conference and the NATA National Symposium. The dates/times will be on the CAATE website as well as in the CAATE newsletters.

Respectfully,



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