







In the state of Texas, the debate is upon us once again. HB 1263 - Patient Access To Physical Therapy - is to be heard in the House Public Health Committee on April 7, 2015.

It is time to push aside the fear-driven dialogue and logical fallacies that have clouded this issue for two decades.

Here are just a few reasons why this bill is so important to the health - and liberties - of all Texans.

1. Freedom of choice: A patient should have the civil liberty and the freedom to make decisions related to their health care - based on their own volition and free will.

Last I looked, the Declaration Of Independence defines **unalienable rights** as **life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness**.

Health - and choice - are implicit to those rights and freedoms.

2. Who better to decide if a patient is appropriate for physical therapy than a physical therapist? As it stands right now, a patient requires a referral from a physician, chiropractor, or even a dentist, for treatment. None of these referral providers have any training in physical therapy.

Doesn't that make it difficult knowing when it is appropriate or not?

3. Patient-centered care, Part I: Patient-centered care requires patients having the ability - and ownership - to make choices related to their care.

In 2013, the PEW Research Center found that 59% of US adults have looked online for health information in the past year, with 35% of US adults having used the Internet to self-diagnose a medical condition they have. Guess what? A total of 41% of **online diagnosers** had their condition confirmed by a clinician!

We don't seem to be too concerned about safety issues with patients seeking self-diagnosis online - and you certainly don't need a referral to use the Internet.

4. Patient-centered care, Part II: You don't need a referral to be seen by any number of licensed and/or unlicensed practitioners. Throw hot stones on the patient, poke them with needles, wave a crystal over their forehead, no worries

but by golly, don't let them be treated by a physical therapist, the experts in movement, exercise and function

5. Costs and the market: A free market forces all providers to bring their best skills and outcomes to the table for the benefit of the patient. Competition is always good.

The payers, be they the insurance providers or patients directly, will all benefit from better outcomes, more efficient use of health care resources, and ultimately, lower costs.

We're not in the year 1950 anymore. The health care landscape is changing. The burden of proof isn't on why patients should have access - the data to support this continues to grow on a daily basis, and has for two decades.

The burden of proof is on those who say that patients shouldn't have access. Please tell me how it can be acceptable, in this day and age, for patients to have their civil liberties limited in a state that prides itself on the same? And, while we're at it

where's your data? Let's move into the year 2015. Over 10,000 Texans agree, having signed a petition in support of HB 1263.

The public hearing is to be held on Tuesday, April 7. Stop by the Capitol and drop a card of support via the House Witness Registration kiosks, preferably before the hearing begins at 8:00 am.

Demand that the Texas Legislature give Texans the right to choose.

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