



This clinic has demonstrated significant reduction in wait times, by improving access to sports medicine physicians and orthopaedic surgeons. In addition, our skilled assessment capabilities have reduced the overconsumption of expensive diagnostic tests (e.g., radiology and MRI) which are typically ordered by non-orthopaedic physician specialists for routine injury evaluation and management. These outcomes shows promise for broader applicability as our aging population will increase demand for orthopaedic assessment and post-operative rehabilitation. (Calgary Herald January 27, 2011 “U of C knee clinic uses innovative online screening to bypass long waits” by Lea Storry.)

Currently, Certified Athletic Therapists and the profession of Athletic Therapy are not regulated under the Alberta Health Professions Act. However, Athletic Therapy is self-regulated under the AATA and the Canadian Athletic Therapists Association’s (CATA) licensing policies, procedures and ethics. Regulation under the Alberta’s Health Professions Act means Certified Athletic Therapists would be recognized as a viable option for musculoskeletal health care in Alberta. (These self governing documents are available at www.aata.ca and www.athletictherapy.org)

Provincial initiatives are underway in Ontario, Quebec, and British Columbia. Quebec will be the first province in Canada to have Athletic Therapy and Certified Athletic Therapists regulated under their provincial HPA within the current year. Ontario is also far along this path. Alberta can continue to be a health care leader by regulating Athletic Therapy, thus allowing all Albertans access to our services.

Over the past 5 years, the AATA has received direction with respect to our quest for regulation from Provincial Ombudsman Gordon Button, College of Dentistry’s Executive Director/Registrar Dr. Gordon Thompson, Calgary MLA Kyle Fawcett, and both Karel Bennet and Donna Carlson of the Ministry of Health and Wellness Workforce Development and Planning. The AATA has aligned its governance with all other regulated professions currently regulated in Alberta’s HPA. I have attached this documentation as well as a copy of the self-governing policies for AATA and CATA for your review.

I welcome the opportunity to further correspond with your ministry. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at 403-282-0754. Thank-you very much for your consideration. I look forward to speaking with you soon regarding his matter.

Sincerely:

Schad Richea MEd., BSc.(Hons), ATC, CAT(C)
AdHoc Chair – Alberta Athletic Therapists Association

Cc: Parliamentary Assistant, Fred Horne
MLA Kyle Fawcett, Calgary-North Hill
AATA President, Breda Lau
Dr. Mark Lafave, Mount Royal University
Dr. Khatija Westbrook Mount Royal University
Professor Dale Butterwick, University of Calgary



February 21, 2011

Honourable Gene Zwozdesky
Minister of Health and Wellness
Alberta Health and Wellness
P.O. Box 1360, Station Main
Edmonton, AB T5J 2N3

RE: Application for Regulation of Alberta's Certified Athletic Therapists under the Health Professions Act.

Dear Minister Zwozdesky:

I am submitting this letter on behalf of the Alberta Athletic Therapists Association (AATA) to begin the application process for regulation of Alberta Certified Athletic Therapists under the Health Professions Act in the Province of Alberta. Alberta has 110 Certified Athletic Therapists (CAT(C)) working in a variety of medical and therapeutic settings across the province. Calgary's Mount Royal University houses one of seven nationally accredited Athletic Therapy programs, which graduates thirty students per year. Athletic Therapists are devoted to the health and wellness of physically active Albertans and need recognition and protection under the HPA.

One of the barriers to physical activity is poor musculoskeletal health (e.g. injuries). Certified Athletic Therapists treat Alberta's athletes – from recreational to professional, as well as the injured worker. Using current evidence, our scope of practice includes on-field and in-clinic prevention, immediate care, reconditioning, and rehabilitation of musculoskeletal injuries.

On-field immediate care of athletic injuries includes basic emergency life support, management of acute spinal injury, and provision of first aid. Preventative care includes: musculoskeletal and postural evaluation, fitness evaluation, conditioning programs, joint/limb taping, and brace applications. Effective long term rehabilitative care is provided to ensure a continued healthy lifestyle and reintegration into the workplace, using contemporary rehabilitative techniques such as therapeutic modalities, soft tissue mobilization, and ergonomic assessments to promote an optimal heal

Athletic Therapists are ready to meaningfully contribute their expertise and skills in the areas of assessment and rehabilitation of orthopaedic injuries. This will directly address health-care skill shortages and therefore reduce access to care wait times as described in the "2014 Health Care Workforce Task Force" and the "Alberta 5 Year Action Plan for Healthcare".

Our capabilities are recognized in our role as "Non-Physician Experts" alongside sport medicine physicians and orthopaedic surgeons in the University of Calgary Acute Knee Injury Clinic. A first in Canada, the clinic is a primary care non-referral based service for patients suffering acute knee injuries. Patients do not require a family physician referral to receive a consult. After booking an appointment online, patients are assessed by non-physician experts who determine the appropriate and most effective course of treatment. This may be rehabilitation and/or physical therapy or if the proper criterion is met, orthopaedic referral or surgery - whichever course is deemed most effective.



AATA AGM 2011 Ad Hoc Report – Regulation Update

On February 21st, 2011 the formal application was delivered to the Minister of Health and Wellness Honourable Gene Zwozdesky in Edmonton and another to MLA Fred Horne Parliamentary Assistant for Health and Wellness. I have been on a panel and spoken with Fred Horne many times and he is already aware of our application. This was a very good political move. I look forward to starting the process of negotiations and further communications with the ministry regarding our application for regulation of Athletic Therapy in the Province of Alberta.

In the mean time, I am also attaching the signed letter with which I encourage all AATA members to forward to their MLA regarding this matter. Any information your MLA has will help our plight when the caucus or members meet in private and this issue is brought up. The letter speaks of an attached Calgary Herald article as well as the AATA and CATA governing documents. This was contained in a 100 page attachment with the original application. I have amended the original letter with references to the Calgary Herald and the AATA and CATA websites.

I anticipate there will be heated negotiations regarding our scope of practice with some push-back from the College of Physical Therapy and College of EMT. I look forward to these negotiations as well as encourage all members to speak to PT and EMT colleagues about our application to decrease the element of surprise. Remember, communication and disclosure is the key to our regulation success.

I would like to thank all AATA members who have given me feedback during this process. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me anytime.

Schad Richea CAT(C)
Ad Hoc Chair – Provincial Regulation