

## Position Statement on Physical Therapist Assistants and Sharp Debridement

Physical therapists are trained in the use of selective and nonselective debridement in the management of wounds. Sharp debridement is a component of physical therapy wound management involving the use of forceps, scissors or a scalpel to remove devitalized tissue, foreign material or debris from a wound bed. Sharp debridement is further defined as "*serial instrumental debridement* (such as forceps and/or scissor removal of loosely adherent necrotic tissue)" and "*selective sharp debridement* (scissors and/or scalpel cutting along the line of demarcation between viable and nonviable tissue)". (Myers 2008) *Selective* sharp debridement is performed exclusively by The Physical Therapist or in special circumstances by a Physical Therapist Assistant who has had advanced training and whom the supervising Physical Therapist has determined is competent to safely and effectively perform this procedure. In instances where a Physical Therapist Assistant is performing *selective* sharp debridement, the delegating Physical Therapist will provide on-site supervision. All other forms of debridement may be delegated to qualified Physical Therapist Assistants who have the appropriate education and training in these forms of wound care management techniques in accordance with the **Oklahoma Administrative Code 435:20-7-1. Direction and supervision of Physical Therapist Assistants**, specifically **OAC 435:20-7-1(a) Responsible Supervision**. (July 2009, pg 35-36).

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