

LOUISIANA STATE BOARD OF MEDICAL EXAMINERS

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April 15, 2014

Ms. Irma Carrasco

Re: Podiatry; Scope of Practice; Epidermal Autograft

Dear Ms. Carrasco:

The Louisiana State Board of Medical Examiners ("Board") had the opportunity to consider your several inquiries relative to the scope of practice of podiatry at its meeting of March 17, 2014. With apologies for the delay in responding, the Board asked that I acknowledge and thank you for your inquiry and relay its advice.

Louisiana Law does not identify the scope of podiatric practice by reference to particular types of diagnostic testing or therapeutic modalities; rather, it does so by specification of, and limitation to, the anatomical field (and structures within such field) within which podiatrists may practice. Podiatric scope of practice is divided into three categories of licensure based on a podiatrist's education and training.

All categories of podiatry licensure allow for the treatment of the foot.¹ Thus, every Louisiana licensed podiatrist may engage in the prevention, examination, diagnosis, medical, surgical, and adjuvant treatment of the human foot.² In addition, the scope of podiatry may also include advanced practice consisting of the treatment of the ankle, muscles, or tendons of the lower leg governing the functions of the foot and ankle by a podiatrist who has completed advanced training determined to be sufficient by the Board at a program accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting association acceptable by the Board.

Podiatrist are approved by the Board for advance practice for either conservative treatment of the ankle (includes treatment of the foot and conservative treatment of the ankle) or surgical treatment of the ankle (includes the scope of practice of the preceding categories, as well as surgical treatment of the ankle). The qualifications and scope of practice of podiatrist approved for advance practice are set forth in the Board's rules and available on its web site.³

The scope of practice of podiatrists within both categories of advanced practice includes, among other items, "surgical treatment of the superficial conditions of the ankle involving the skin and overlying tissues and extending proximally."⁴ Thus, while a podiatrist holding either category of advance practice license may harvest epidermal skin from the lower leg, *i.e.* calf, the scope of podiatry does not include harvesting epidermal skin from the thigh. Therefore, in

¹The 'foot' is defined as "that part of the human anatomy which consists of the tarsal bones, metatarsal bones, phalanges, and all supportive or connective tissue, or both, immediately adjacent thereto not to extend proximal to the proximal dome of the talus." La. Rev. Stat. §37:611; La. Adm. C. 46XLV.1303.

²La. Adm. C. 46XLV.1304B.

³La. Adm. C. 46XLV.1307. The scope of practice held by each Louisiana licensed podiatrist is reflected on his or her license and may be verified on line by way of the Board's web site.

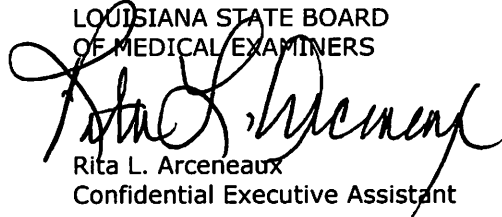
⁴La. Adm. C. 46XLV.1307C.3. 1307E.1.

the event of such a need, a podiatrist would be required to consult with an appropriately trained and qualified physician.

I trust this is responsive to your several questions. If you have additional questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

Yours very truly,

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rita L. Arceneaux", is written over the typed name and title.

Rita L. Arceneaux
Confidential Executive Assistant