

**BRAD SHERMAN
REGULATORY CONFERENCE**
(formerly CARE Conference)
Compliance and Regulatory Education:
Best Practices for Athletic Trainer Regulation



Athletic Trainer Specialties and Scope of Practice

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boc BOARD OF CERTIFICATION
FOR THE ATHLETIC TRAINER

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Presentation Objectives

1. Differentiate general practice, advanced practice, and specialty practice
2. Describe the association between specialty certification and scope of practice

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Athletic Trainer Specialties and Specialty Certifications

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What does it mean when someone claims they are a specialist?



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CAATE Residency

Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education
approved residency specialty areas

- Prevention and Wellness
- Urgent and Emergent Care
- Primary Care
- Orthopaedics
- Rehabilitation
- Behavioral Health
- Pediatrics
- Performance Enhancement

NOTE

- These are not formally defined**
- Instead, they are practice areas the CAATE states ATs have "advanced patient-care knowledge and skills."
- Graduates of these programs are residency-trained specialists**

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Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education, Residency and Fellowship
Approved August 15, 2024. <https://caate.org/programs/fellowship/>

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Credentialing



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Delivering lessons of quality certification and assessment-based certificate programs. Institute for Credentialing Excellence. Approved October 26, 2022. <https://www.instituteofcredentialing.org/credentialing/assessments/assessment-based-certificate-programs/>

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Assessment-Based Certificate Programs

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These programs have four traits.

- While assessment is a key component, the **primary purpose of the program is the education and training of its learning objectives.**
- NOTE**
- Certificates of attendance/participation and assessment-based certificates are not the same



1 Earned certificate identifies having the knowledge and skills associated with the education program

2 Has rubric/guidelines outlining eligibility to earn the certificate

3 Established procedures for assessing the candidate, including passing the exam

4 The program (i.e., the assessment) is evaluated for its overall effectiveness

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Professional or Personnel Certification Programs

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These include the traits for assessment-based certificate programs AND the traits listed here

- Professional or personnel certification programs **MUST include the following to achieve higher credibility**
- Including all these traits means **the practitioner can state they are a board-certified specialist**
- Currently, athletic training has just one: orthopedics



1 Independent and autonomous governing body

2 Objective practice analysis to validate knowledge and skills

3 Credentialed individual is required to maintain continued competence

Professional or Personnel Certification Programs

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Scope of Practice:

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Generalist, Advanced Practitioner, or Specialist

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Research Findings

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Frank et al examined the barriers early professional and career advancement ATs perceive about specialty certifications

- Overarching Theme 1
 - Perceived barriers BEFORE taking specialty certification exam
 - Subtheme: *Participants were unable to comprehend athletic training as a general practice*
- Overarching Theme 2
 - Perceived barriers AFTER earning specialty certification
 - Subtheme: *Participants concerned about the impact of state practice acts on how the board-certified specialist practices*

Frank EM, Hudson MR, Webb A, Griffin R, Steiner L, Barstow CS. Perceived barriers of athletic trainers about earning their specialty certification in a competitive entry. *Physical Therapy*. 2020;100(10):1500-1506. doi:10.1093/ptj/pz294. [Epub ahead of print March 19, 2020]. Omaha, Nebraska.

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Research Findings

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Anderson et al wanted to help athletic trainers understand what is advanced practice. Their findings defined it as...

1. Formal training and education beyond the professional level
2. Informal training and education (eg, real practice experience)
3. Knowledge and skills with core competencies (eg, EBP) as well as an advanced scope of practice
 - a. Reported *some believed advanced practice was associated with a "higher level" or "broad" scope of practice*
4. Certain number of years practicing

Anderson EC, Beaton CDH, Swann DL. Athletic trainers' perceptions of advanced clinical practice: defining advanced clinical practice in athletic training. *Adv Train Educ J*. 2020;10(1):15-26. doi:10.4081/atj.2020.100000.

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Scope of Practice

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It is NOT standard of care, professional roles/responsibilities, or job duties

What is it?

- "The activities that an individual health care practitioner is permitted to perform within a specific profession." (p8)
- It is "established by the [state] practice act of the specific practitioner's board, and the rules adopted pursuant to the act." (p8)

Can the scope of practice for different professions overlap?

- **Yes**, because they reflect shared competencies
- This is apparent in that collaboration among health care professionals is common and can be effective. Collaboration would be hindered if the scope of practice for health care practitioners did not overlap.

Federation of State Medical Boards. Assessing Scope of Practice: Health Care Delivery. *Clinical Questions in Resolving Public Access and Safety*. 2008:1-10. <https://www.fsmb.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/03/assessing-scope-of-practice-in-health-care-delivery.pdf>. Accessed August 10, 2024.

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So Let's Consider This Question...

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What is the difference between scope of practice for the general practitioner, the advanced practitioner, and the board-certified specialist athletic trainer?

- There is **no difference in their scope of practice** because the state practice act defines it equally for each practitioner; HOWEVER, ...
- The **advanced practitioner and the specialist have added more knowledge, skills, and abilities to their practice**, but they are **all first credentialed as general practitioners**.

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Let's Look at Medical Licenses and Specialties

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American Board of Medical Specialties

- "All physicians in the United States **must be licensed in order to practice medicine**, but they are **not required to be certified**... Certification requirements go above and beyond licensing requirements...represents a physician's commitment to continually expand and refresh his or her knowledge and expertise..."

Federation of State Medical Boards

- "All state medical boards issue licenses for the general practice of medicine...physicians are not licensed based upon their specialty or practice focus..."

American Board of Medical Specialties. Difference between board certification and medical licensure. Accessed March 7, 2016. <http://www.abms.org/education/continuing-education/difference-between-board-certification-and-medical-licensure>.
Federation of State Medical Boards. Understanding medical regulation in the United States: module 1 an introduction to medical regulation. Accessed November 15, 2015. <http://www.fsmbs.org/education/regulatory-issues/understanding-medical-regulation>.
regulatory.pdf

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From a Scope of Practice Perspective...

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Athletic training is a general practice

5 criteria that go into defining general practice for a health care discipline

1. Describe the core content and function of the discipline to identify the specific characteristics of the clinical work.
2. Be supplementary to the description of the medical discipline and accept that overlaps exist between many medical specialties.
3. Be universal, independent of country specific systems, settings, or working methods.
4. Provide a framework for the content of teaching and training.
5. Describe where evidence must be sought to develop the best science-based core function(p555)

O'Brien F, Chikman J, Nardelli P. General practice: where to find a solution. BMJ. 2004;329(7474):1007-1011. doi:10.1136/bmj.329.7474.1007

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Comparing Scope of Practice for General Practice and Specialty Practice

Criteria 1 of General Practice: Describe the Core Content and Function of the Discipline

- 8th edition of the **BOC Practice Analysis for the ATC Credential**
- Domain IV- Therapeutic Intervention
 - Task Statement 0404- **Administer therapeutic modalities and devices using evidence-based procedures and parameters to address impairments and enhance activity and participation levels**

For a specialty practice, the practice analysis identifies more knowledge, skills, and abilities for the general practice task(s)

- 1st edition of the **BOC Practice Analysis for the Board-Certified AT in Orthopedics**
- Domain II- Procedural Knowledge
 - Task 3- **Provide intra-procedural care to ensure optimal patient outcomes**

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Henderson, J.P. Content outline for practice analysis, 8th ed. Board of Certification, Inc. (2021).
<https://www.boc-board.com/credentialing/credentialing-process/credentialing-process-overview>
 Henderson, J.P. Practice Analysis Study for athletic trainers who specialize in orthopedics. Board of Certification, 2020.

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Athletic Training: General, Advanced, and Specialty Practice

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<https://www.boc-board.com/credentialing/credentialing-process/credentialing-process-overview>
 Hudson, M.B. Exam 3: Specialty certification and your place within the practice. (2020).
<https://www.boc-board.com/credentialing/credentialing-process/credentialing-process-overview>

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For more information, FAQs and updates:

- Visit the BOC website at [BOCATC.org](https://www.boc-board.com)
- For specialty certification questions, you can email me
 - michaelhudson@missouristate.edu

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