Talking About Power Imbalances

The Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy was pleased to see such a timely article in the May 2023 publication of APTA Magazine ("Is It Ever OK to Date a Former Patient?"). Thank you for bringing this important topic to light and the opportunity to engage in this conversation. When assessing the ethical situation of a physical therapist or physical therapist assistant potentially engaging in a romantic or sexual relationship with a patient, it's important to explore the topic from various perspectives.

A significant effort was made to update the Model Practice Act section on sexual misconduct, and the reference is appreciated. It is worth reemphasizing the legal considerations, as each jurisdiction may have more specific regulations regarding the patient-provider relationship.

Public protection, and specifically the issue of sexual misconduct and boundary violations in the physical therapy profession, is a high priority for FSBPT. Over the last few years, our initiatives have included creating a task force that evolved into a standing committee to further explore this issue. FSBPT's Sexual Misconduct and Boundary Violations Committee recently delved into the concept of power imbalance as discussed in the article. In December 2022, the committee published a white paper titled "Power Imbalance in Physical Therapy," which is publicly available on our website. We encourage more in-depth discussion of power imbalance.

This year, to further FSBPT's mission to protect the public and ensure access to safe physical therapist services, the committee is continuing to create more resources for all stakeholders: the public, licensees, and regulatory boards.

Again, thank you for publishing an article with such an important message. By challenging clinicians and administrators to think about this topic proactively, they perhaps can avoid an ethical conflict or violation of their physical therapy practice act.

KRISTINA LOUNSBERGY, CHAIR, FSBPT SEXUAL MISCONDUCT AND BOUNDARIES VIOLATIONS COMMITTEE

SAVE RELLING, FSBPT PRESIDENT

Kudos for Keith

As a PT who works with professional athletes in Phoenix, Arizona, it was a delight to read your article ("On the Right Track," May 2023, by freelance writer Keith Loria.) Thank you for capturing the experiences as you did and relaying them so well to your readers. I appreciated your insights and the lens with which you conveyed the information.

If you are ever in Arizona, I would love to grab a cup of coffee with you.

Keep on keeping on and writing like a superstar!

TONY KOTTOOR, PT, DPT