

Dear Friends of Acupuncture,

Please allow me to introduce myself. I am Junie Norfleet, the immediate past-chair of the North Carolina Acupuncture Licensing Board (NCALB). I write to you solely in my capacity as a concerned citizen and a Licensed Acupuncturist in North Carolina.

I would like to appeal to you today regarding an issue that affects the health and safety of the public – “dry needling.” It is of particular importance to people who have used and practice Chinese medicine, one of the fastest growing and effective modalities in this country.

Physical Therapists (PTs) who have renamed Acupuncture “dry needling,” are practicing Acupuncture with as little as one or two weekends of training. By reclassifying Acupuncture as “dry needling,” PTs seek to avoid the education, clinical training, licensing and professional oversight required of medical professionals who perform invasive procedures. It appears that many PTs are also receiving insurance compensation from insurance companies and Medicare which limit coverage for Acupuncture.

As practitioners and patients of Acupuncture, we are compelled to stand up, to repudiate claims that this ancient medicine is a new technique. In North Carolina there are at least two cases where patients being treated by PTs performing “dry needling” were harmed during the procedure. One had a serious pneumothorax requiring emergency surgery and another was hospitalized with a spinal cord injury. You may be familiar with injuries by dry needling in your own communities as well.

The NCALB brought a lawsuit against the North Carolina Board of Physical Therapy Examiners (NCBPTE) asking the Court to stop this dangerous practice and to have “dry needling” declared as Acupuncture. As the only state to have sued a physical therapy licensing board, *the NCALB took a bold and courageous step that could impact this dangerous practice everywhere.* The importance of this precedential setting case cannot be overstated for the benefit of the public. To date, the NCBPTE has been able to avoid a decision with procedural, not substantive, defenses. All indications are that on December 7, 2016, a hearing will address the merits of the case. As a community, we must hold the belief that when the facts and arguments are brought before the Court, the concerns about PTs performing “dry Needling” will be validated in our state. This will serve as precedent for other jurisdictions around the country.

I know firsthand that the NCALB has endured a tremendous amount of financial, political and emotional stress in taking its stand for patient safety as required by law. Unfortunately, the filing of a retaliatory anti-trust suit in federal court was just the beginning. I am crestfallen to share that I, and the Vice Chair of the NCALB, were removed from our Board positions with the NCALB at this critical juncture and without warning. Despite my removal, I am committed to continue working toward finding the appropriate regulation of Acupuncture and “dry needling” in North Carolina, while supporting the NCALB in every way that I can.

It appears that there is nothing that I can do about my removal from the Board. However, my removal from the Board did nothing to change my position that the NCALB’s lawsuit is a just cause in the name of patient safety. As a community, this is OUR case. Each of us – every Acupuncturist and every member of the public who believes that all medical professionals must adhere to universal oath: to do no harm – must step forward in support of this effort.

The physical therapy trade associations, both at the state and national levels, are well-funded with longstanding political connections to achieve their goals. Our community is compelled to stand up against these established, large financial and political interests who are poised to mobilize. I ask you to offer your support to the remaining members of the NCALB as they stand firmly in their integrity to protect our citizens from the unlicensed practice of Acupuncture under the pseudonym “dry needling.” Our community must be relentless in this effort. The wellbeing and health of people in our communities is too important to allow it to be defeated by money and politics.

Owing to my former role on the NCALB I am acutely aware that the Board is in extreme need of financial help. As a member of the Acupuncture Community, I am asking you to make a donation to help the Board continue in its efforts to protect the public and to have “dry needling” confirmed as Acupuncture. Please send any donation you can at this point in time.

I know the Board can win this fight with our help. Stand with me by standing with the NCALB.

Stand With Me! The PT’s have deep financial resources; the Board needs you and your donations given today!

Stand With Me! I believe the Board can win this fight, but they need your help. We must fund the NCALB so that our case can be heard and defended.

Stand With Me! By supporting the Board in protecting the public from harm.

Stand With Me! GIVE because the reputation of the integrity of Acupuncture is unfairly soiled in the press every time a PT injures a patient by “dry needling” without adequate training in acupuncture.

Please Stand With Me NOW! by sending a check to the Board’s legal trust fund in support of its request that the court make the determination that “Dry needling” is Acupuncture.

Sincerely,

Junie Norfleet, Lic. Ac.

Immediate past Chair of the North Carolina Acupuncture Licensing Board

Trust Fund for NCALB

ONLINE CONTRIBUTIONS: Go to this URL: <http://smvt.com/> (and then scroll to bottom of page left side)

Click On: **Online Bill Payment**

Click on: **Trust Payments**

Complete information on this screen:

Invoice Number: **NCALB Legal Trust Fund**

Client Name: **NCALB**

Amount. **We appreciate each and every amount**

Name: **Name on Your Credit Card Here**

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Type of Card: **Credit Card Number and Expiration Date**

If you enter YOUR email address we will send you an email confirmation.

If you have any issues, please call Renee or Pat: (919) 821.3008

CONTRIBUTIONS BY MAIL CAN BE SENT TO:

NCALB Legal Trust Fund

c/o Stevens Martin Vaughn & Tadych, PLLC

1101 Haynes Street, Suite 100

Raleigh, North Carolina 27604

Go Fund Me

GO FUND ME <https://www.gofundme.com/fightdryneedling>

Thank you for your time and effort. We appreciate your support!!!!!!

