



DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
Under Secretary for Health
Washington DC 20420

August 1, 2024

Ms. Talia Wilson
Senior Board Administrator
Advisory Board of Massage Therapists
New Hampshire Office of Professional
Licensure & Certification
7 Eagle Square
Concord, NH 03301

Dear Ms. Wilson:

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is committed to honoring the Nation's Veterans by delivering world-class health care and service. In November 2020, VA [issued an interim final rule](https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/11/12/2020-24817/authority-of-va-professionals-to-practice-health-care) (https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/11/12/2020-24817/authority-of-va-professionals-to-practice-health-care) confirming that VA health care professionals may practice their health care profession consistent with the scope and requirements of their VA employment, notwithstanding any state license, registration, certification, or other requirements that unduly interfere with their practice.

VA is developing national standards of practice to uphold safe, high-quality care for the Nation's Veterans in VA's integrated health care system and to ensure that VA health care professionals can meet the needs of Veterans when practicing within the scope of their VA employment. National standards are designed to increase Veterans' access to safe and effective health care, thereby improving health outcomes for the Nation's Veterans. These standards apply exclusively to VA employees, and most VA health care professionals will not experience any change in the way they practice health care. National standards of practice also protect VA health care professionals from state disciplinary action that is based solely on those professionals practicing within the scope of their VA employment, which includes their VA national standard of practice. However, that does not prevent state boards from taking disciplinary actions against health care professionals for negligence or misconduct.

To develop national standards, VA reviewed state licensure, certification, and registration requirements; identified enterprise-wide practices that would enhance the practice of the profession at all VA medical facilities; and engaged with both VA employees and external stakeholders such as Veterans Service Organizations, labor partners, and professional associations relevant to the occupation.

We would like to provide you, as a state licensing board for Massage Therapists, the opportunity to comment directly to us on the proposed national standard for Massage Therapists (enclosed). Please note, this standard is not final. The Massage Therapist national standard has been posted in the [Federal Register](https://www.federalregister.gov/agencies/veterans-affairs-department/) (https://www.federalregister.gov/agencies/veterans-affairs-department/) for broader public comment; we will post the link to our [website](#)

Page 2.

Ms. Talia Wilson

(<https://www.va.gov/STANDARDSOFPRACTICE/providing-feedback.asp>) once the standard is available for public comment.

VA's proposed Massage Therapist standard of practice **does not** vary from your state's licensure requirements. However, there may be variances with other states' requirements.

If New Hampshire changes its requirements and places new limitations on the tasks and duties it allows which are inconsistent with what the national standard of practice authorizes, the national standard of practice preempts such limitations and authorizes the VA health care professional to continue to practice consistent with the tasks and duties outlined in the national standard. We encourage you to contact VA.NSP@va.gov if at any time you enact such a restriction.

We would appreciate acknowledgement of receipt of this letter and your comments on the VA standard within 60 days of receipt of this letter. Furthermore, please provide any context you believe would be appropriate on your state's licensing laws, regulations, requirements, or restrictions related to either the supervision of individuals in this occupation or the supervision of individuals in a related discipline that VA should consider. We also ask you to consider creating an exemption for Federal government employees within your state practice act.

We welcome the opportunity to further discuss the standard through a follow-up meeting if desired. Please send your comments and meeting request to VA.NSP@va.gov.

Thank you for your support in enabling VA health care professionals to provide the best health care to the Nation's Veterans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shereef Elnahal', written in a cursive style.

Shereef Elnahal, M.D., MBA

Enclosure