

**Department Of Health
Health Professions Quality Assurance Division
Washington State Board of Osteopathic Medicine and Surgery
Interpretative Statement**

Title:	Physician/Patient Relationship; Evaluation of patient	Number: OP07-31
Reference:	Board minutes: November 16, 2007; September 26, 2014	
Contact:	Program Manager	
Effective Date:	November 16, 2007; Modified September 26, 2014	
Supersedes:		
Approved:	Board	
Signature Board Chair		

Interpretative Statement:

The Board of Osteopathic Medicine and Surgery has been given the responsibility of licensing and disciplining osteopathic physicians and physician assistants (practitioner(s)) in the state of Washington. This charge includes the protection of the health, welfare and safety of the citizens of the state.

The Board has been asked to address when it is appropriate to conduct an examination when providing care, including manipulative therapy, to a patient. The Board has determined that basic principles of osteopathic medical practice be utilized regardless of the practice setting or length of care provided to a patient. The Board requires a proper practitioner-patient relationship be established before commencing any treatment. A proper relationship, at a minimum, requires:

- 1) A reasonable attempt to verify the identity of the person requesting care;
- 2) Establishing a diagnosis through the use of accepted medical practices such as a patient history, mental status exam, physical examination, appropriate diagnostic and laboratory testing, and/or maintaining adequate records of exams, tests and findings;
- 3) Discussing with the patient the diagnosis and the evidence for it, the risks and benefits of various treatment options; and
- 4) Ensuring availability of the practitioner or coverage for the patient for appropriate follow-up care.

Follow-up patient visits may include any of the requirements listed for a practitioner-patient relationship. A patient's condition must be evaluated on each visit prior to rendering care or treatment.

Action:

Follow approved Health Systems Quality Assurance policies and procedures for processing complaints and taking disciplinary action.