

Role of a Non-Physician in the Determination of the Patient's Differential Diagnosis

In the practice of physiatry, a differential diagnosis requires an understanding of and integration of multiple medical skills. Non-physicians can be actively involved in taking the patient's history and in the performance of portions of the patient's physical examination. However, the determination of a differential diagnosis requires a comprehensive understanding of the patient's physiology and pathology and its relationship to electrodiagnostic, X-ray, laboratory and other diagnostic testing.

It is the position of the American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation that the determination of the differential diagnosis constitutes the practice of medicine and should only be performed by a licensed physician.

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