

4/10/19



TO: House Committee on Families, Children, and Seniors

FROM: Michigan Physical Therapy Association

DATE: April 10, 2019

SUBJECT: Please support House Bill 4108: Physical Therapists and Physical Therapist Assistants added as Mandatory Reporters of Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect

Dear Members of the House Committee on Families, Children, and Seniors,

My name is Jena Colon. I am the Legislative Director for the Michigan Physical Therapy Association (MPTA). I am also a physical therapist that has worked in several settings including outpatient, home care, as well as inpatient acute care hospital with all patient populations.

I am grateful for the opportunity to speak with you regarding House Bill 4108. This bill will add Physical Therapists (PTs) and Physical Therapist Assistants (PTAs) to the list of mandatory reporters of suspected child abuse and neglect.

**Current Law for Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect in Michigan**

The Michigan Child Protection Law, 1975 PA 238, MCL 722.621 et. Seq.(CPL) includes regulation of professionals who are required to report suspected child abuse or neglect. "Mandated reporters are an essential part of the child protection system because they have an enhanced capacity, through their expertise and direct contact with children, to identify suspected child abuse and neglect.

**Reports made by mandatory reporters are confirmed at nearly double the rate of those made by non-mandated reporters."** 4

**Professionals Identified as Mandatory Reporters by Michigan Statute**

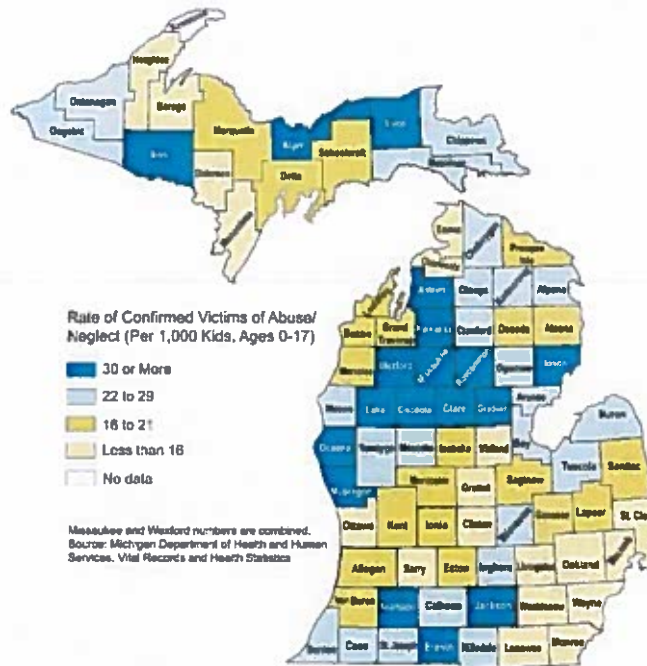
Physician	Audiologist	School Administrator
Dentist	Psychologist	School Counselor
Physician's Assistant	Marriage/Family Therapist	School Teacher
Registered Dental Hygienist	Licensed Professional Counselor	Law Enforcement Officer
Medical Examiner	Social Worker	Clergy
Nurse	Social Service Technician	Reg. Child Care Provider
Emergency Medical Provider	Friend of the Court	

The CPL identifies many health professionals as mandatory reporters of suspected child abuse or neglect. PTs and PTAs are currently NOT mandatory reporters of child abuse or neglect in Michigan unless the PT or PTA is classified as a teacher in a school system.

Please know that physical therapists have reported cases of suspected child abuse and neglect over the years, as permitted under the Child Protection Law, but they are NOT REQUIRED to do so. This bill remedies that loophole and increases accountability of physical therapists on behalf of the children of this state, and MPTA is strongly in support of this change.

Passage of HB 4108 would serve as an opportunity to remind and further educate health care professionals about the problem of child abuse and neglect in our state. If HB 4108 becomes law, MPTA pledges to educate our members on what it means to be official mandatory reporters of child abuse and neglect.

Confirmed Victims of Abuse/Neglect, 2015



1. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Children's Bureau. (2017). Child maltreatment 2015. Retrieved from <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/resource/child-maltreatment-2015>
2. Guevara Warren, Alicia S. 2017 Kids Count in Michigan Data Book: A Michigan Where All Kids Thrive. Lansing, Michigan: Michigan League for Public Policy.
3. Caldwell, R. & Noor, I. (2005). "The Costs of Child Abuse vs. Child Abuse Prevention: A Multi-year Follow-up in Michigan."
4. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, State of Michigan. (2018). Mandated Reporters' Resource Guide. Retrieved from [https://www.michigan.gov/documents/dhs/Pub-112\\_179456\\_7.pdf](https://www.michigan.gov/documents/dhs/Pub-112_179456_7.pdf)