

TESTIMONY OF ACE PLYLEY

ON BEHALF OF THE PENNSYLVANIA ORTHOTICS AND PROSTHETICS SOCIETY (POPS)

BEFORE THE HOUSE PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE COMMITTEE REGARDING HB 2015 AND THE NEED FOR LICENSURE OF THE O & P PROFESSION

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 19, 2008
418 Main Capitol Building

Good morning Chairman Sturla and members of the Committee. My name is Ace Plyley and I am pleased and honored to have been invited by POPS and Randy Stevens to testify at this Professional Licensure meeting in the House of Representatives.

I am not diabetic but I inherited a neuropathy called Charcot Marie Tooth Disease. This caused me to develop a pressure ulcer on the bottom of my right foot in 1991. In the past seventeen years, I have been hospitalized with infections and osteomyelitis several times. I have had three surgeries on this foot. When living in New Jersey, I spent one full year driving over an hour to a Wound Center every week. Every treatment they knew was tried to heal my wound, but to no avail. Several doctors have told me that I could lose my foot.

In 1999, we moved to Pennsylvania. The same week as the move, my foot became infected and the leg very swollen. I was seen by Mark Pinker DPM in Carlisle who immediately sent me to the Hospital. I was operated on and spent 6 weeks in Manor Care given IV 6 times a day.

In March 2001, Mark Pinker DPM performed Bilaminar Skin Graft on my foot. I had temporary success in resolving the ulcer. I was prescribed my first pair of custom molded shoes with a brace to avoid pressure on the ulcer. Randy Stevens measured me for the footwear. Until the new shoes, I was always on crutches, my only means of being mobile. As much as these shoes helped, the wound at times would be large, become infected and I was constantly using antibiotics and sometimes being hospitalized.

Randy opened his own business. In June 2006, he introduced me to the Arizona AFO Inc and had that company make a custom molded Neurowalker that I have been wearing for the last 20 months. Randy customized the boot just for me. The ulcer is healed because of his professionalism, his caring and his expertise of knowing just what to do.

Because of Randy, I do not have to rely on crutches. I can walk on my own. I love my freedom to walk with my wife. I can exercise and bend over without falling over.

Randy has helped me lead an active life. Because of Randy, my wound has healed, there has been no infection and no hospital stays.

I credit his professional manor, his expertise, his caring and can't thank him enough for all the blessings he has given me.

Being from the state of New Jersey there is state licensure and through licensing that lets the public and myself know if one is qualified to provide the services for which I needed. But here in Pennsylvania it has been by trial and error because of the lack of licensure it has made it difficult to know who is qualified and who is not until you see an individual and then it is a hit or miss situation. To ensure quality of care and to protect myself and the public here in Pennsylvania, I believe that licensure needs to and should be enacted within this State.

Therefore, I request The Licensure Act, House Bill 2015 and its amendments be passed and made a State Law.