Adam, PT, DPT, has been a practicing physical therapist for nearly 10 years in an orthopedic private practice. His schedule is fully booked for the day when a patient walks in requesting to be seen for neck strain following an auto accident.

Adam wants to help the patient who is clearly in pain and doesn’t want to disappoint the patient or the referring physician, one of his top referral sources. Since he doesn’t have time to fit a full evaluation and treatment session into his schedule, Adam directs Katie, his physical therapist assistant (PTA), to perform the evaluation and document her findings within the patient’s chart. Adam knows he can find a few minutes to review the evaluation between his other patients and provide treatment to his new client.

What Adam doesn’t realize is that, even though his goal to ensure the patient is seen as soon as possible is a noble one, he is asking Katie to perform the physical therapist evaluation, which is outside of the scope of a PTA’s licensure. This is considered inappropriate use of supervised personnel and is a violation of state law.

Could the government or private payers view any of your activities as fraud, abuse, or waste?

The health care payment system is complex. The gap between what we know and what we ought to know about compliance, documentation, fraud, and abuse is expanding.

It’s time to bridge the knowledge gap—what you don’t know CAN hurt you.

Program integrity efforts have intensified to find and stop bad actors, but honest, well-intentioned practitioners are also getting caught up in the wide net being cast to fight fraud, abuse, and waste.

APTA is committed to helping you ensure you’re not one of them.