

Massage Therapy
Association of Manitoba

STANDARDS *of* PRACTICE

The Practice of Massage Therapy in Manitoba

The Massage Therapy Association of Manitoba (MTAM) has based this document on the National Standards of Practice document developed by The Canadian Massage Therapist Alliance and the Inter-Jurisdictional Practice Competencies and Performance Indicators for Massage Therapists at Entry-to-practice (2016) document developed by the Federation of Massage Therapy Regulation Authorities of Canada. MTAM has endorsed these documents to ensure consistent high standards of care in massage therapy in Manitoba.

MASSAGE THERAPY

The practice of massage therapy is the assessment of the Musculoskeletal system of the body and the treatment and prevention of physical dysfunction, injury and pain by manipulation, mobilization and other manual methods to develop, maintain, rehabilitate or augment physical function, relieve pain or promote health. Massage therapy is a clinically-oriented healthcare option that helps alleviate the musculoskeletal disorders associated with everyday stress, physical manifestation of mental distress, muscular overuse and many persistent pain syndromes.

MASSAGE THERAPISTS

Massage therapists are primary health care professionals who consult and collaborate with their patients and other health care professionals to provide patient-centered care. Massage therapists ensure that the patients receive the highest quality evidence-based care in the treatment, management and prevention of musculoskeletal dysfunction and disorders. Massage therapists contribute to the reduction of pain and the rehabilitation of musculoskeletal dysfunctions to ensure maximization of function and improved quality of life.

EDUCATION

Massage therapy diploma programs are offered at a number of community colleges as well as private career colleges. A diploma that meets the educational requirements set by the Inter-Jurisdictional Practice Competencies and Performance Indicators requires a minimum of 2,200-hour massage program.

MASSAGE THERAPY PRACTICE

Massage therapists function in both individual practice and collaboratively through an inter-professional team-based approach. Massage therapy interventions complement those of other health professionals and massage therapists understand and respect the roles, responsibilities and differing perspectives of other health professionals. Massage therapists work collaboratively with other health professionals within interdisciplinary teams and communicate relevant information to those individuals within the patient's circle of care to achieve the optimal level of patient care. Massage therapy is an important part of a health care regimen. There are significant benefits to be achieved using massage therapy treatments including, but not limited to, reducing or eliminating pain, improving joint mobility and circulation, reducing the physical symptoms presented by depression and anxiety, chronic stress, reducing muscular tension and improving lymphedema. Patients may seek care from a massage therapist for a variety of acute and chronic conditions, and massage therapists can work with a wide variety of patients in the treatment of illness, injury rehabilitation and disability.

The first visit to a massage therapist includes a comprehensive patient intake process, comprising of confidential health history information and informed consent. This involves setting realistic goals for treatment, discussing possible responses to treatment, and being informed of alternate care options. An objective physical assessment in conjunction with subjective information is used to determine potential and actual impairments, pain, functional limitations, and other limitations. Upon analysis of the assessment, the massage therapist will develop a treatment plan with the patient to ensure that the appropriate treatment is provided.

EVIDENCE-INFORMED DECISION MAKING

Evidence-informed decision making involves integrating the best available research evidence into the decision-making process. Evidence integrated into massage therapy practice uses research findings from a variety of manual therapy and rehabilitation disciplines. Massage therapists are also able to interpret and apply relevant research within the environment in which they practice.

Standards of Practice

The standards describe the expectations for professional behavior and conduct to ensure high-quality, safe and ethical delivery of care. The standards are founded on the values, principles and practice of the profession of massage therapy. These standards are intended to provide an overall definition of the benchmark performance expectations for massage therapists practicing in Canada.

The Standards of Practice are intended to be generic and have been developed to describe the outcomes of the various tasks the therapist is required to perform within the Scope of Practice. The Standards of Practice describe how well a therapist is expected to perform. How to perform each task will be determined by the curriculum developed by the massage therapy educational programs.

The Standards of Practice form a live and dynamic document that will evolve as changes in practice and the profession evolve. This document reflects changes and revisions from the previous Standards of Practice adopted by the MTAM in 2003.

WHY HAVE STANDARDS OF PRACTICE?

The Standards of Practice have been developed as a tool to determine whether a Massage Therapist can do the job at an acceptable level. These Standards will serve as a reference tool for:

- Massage therapists to better understand their job requirements
- Educators to address as objectives in curriculum design
- Membership eligibility with the MTAM
- Complaints investigation
- Discipline hearings
- Fitness to practice and quality assurance
- Patient relations
- The public, by providing objective standards by which to assess the quality of treatment.

CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT

Massage Therapists are advised that giving any information about a patient to any person except to facilitate assessment or treatment of a patient, or as otherwise allowed or required by law (i.e., Personal Health Information Act) is professional misconduct.

ACCOUNTABILITY TO THE STANDARDS

The Massage Therapist must comply with any requirement as defined in any existing legislation and regulation, and any MTAM bylaw or policy related to the performance of the therapist's job.

The Massage Therapist is only held accountable to meet a Standard if they are the person who has performed the task.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

Massage therapists in Manitoba are accountable to the following pieces of provincial and federal legislation:

- Personal Health Information Act (PHIA)
- Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA)
- Manitoba Human Rights Code
- Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (CCRF)

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

A standard of practice typically consists of three inter-related sub-components that describe:

Conditions

Conditions describe the situation in which the task must be accomplished. This may include any resources, tools, materials, etc. that are given/available.

Task

A task is a description of what a therapist is expected to accomplish.

Standard

A standard is a description of a minimum level of performance one is required to demonstrate in the performance of a task. A standard is stated in observable and measurable terms. It must be precise and clear to the therapist who is held accountable for accomplishing it. It must also be clear to the patients and the public (who assess the therapist's ability to accomplish a task as measured by the required standard).

Standards include one or more of the following measures:

- Technical Quality
- Interpersonal Quality
- Safety
- Timeliness

In this document, the term "patient" is used to refer to the client or patient of the massage therapist.

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Communication / Public Health Standard 1

Provide Massage Therapy in a Safe and Comfortable Environment

CONDITIONS

In a treatment area and public areas of the facility, using disinfecting cleaning materials, massage equipment, freshly laundered linen.

TASK

Prepare the treatment area, equipment, and public areas in the treatment facility to that they are safe and comfortable.

STANDARD

Quality / Technical:

- Maintain clean and tidy treatment areas, reception areas, and washroom facilities.
- Ensure that the treatment area and equipment surfaces have been cleaned according to Universal Precautions.
- Use only sheets/linens and towels that have been freshly laundered.
- Ensure that linens, towels, blankets, pillows, bolsters, and equipment that come in contact with the patient have not been used by a prior patient without freshly washing/cleaning them.
- Ensure that linen used for draping will allow for full coverage of the patient and is non-transparent.
- Ensure the treatment area allows sufficient privacy for the patient to dress/undress as needed, and to discuss personal health information.
- Maintain appropriate room temperature.

Safety:

- Ensure that the linens and pillows do not interfere with the patient's ability to get on and off the treatment table.
- Ensure that any obstacle or substance that could make the floor slippery is removed from the treatment room to prevent accidental falls.
- Ensure that equipment is properly maintained and that manufacturer's instructions are followed correctly.
- Limit the transference of infectious diseases.
- Maintain adequate lighting.
- Ensure that fire exits are unobstructed and fire extinguishers are readily available.

Timing:

- Prior to the patient entering the treatment area.
- After a patient who required the use of protective barriers leaves the treatment area.

Communication / Public Health Standard 2

Inform the Patient of the Fees and Obtain Their Agreement to a Fee Schedule

CONDITIONS

Given a patient who has come to you for massage therapy.

TASK

Inform a patient who has come to you for massage therapy of the fees, and obtain their agreement to a fee schedule.

STANDARD

Quality / Technical:

- Ensuring that your fee schedule is posted in a location where patients may see it or a copy provided to the patient.
- Ensuring that you explain the rates for a massage therapy appointment to the patient including what part of the treatment time will be used for taking a health history and assessment / reassessment.
- Ensuring that you explain to the patient your policy regarding cancellation of appointments. Providing the patient with an opportunity to ask questions about the rate and fee schedule.
- So that any charges that deviate from the set schedule have been agreed to by the patient and documented in the clinical notes with the reasons and agreement indicated.
- The patient is entitled to an official receipt for all payments made to the massage therapist. Each receipt will include the date of treatment, treatment provided, and fee received. The massage therapist's name, registration or provider number and signature are required on all receipts along with all other requirements as outlined by the provincial regulatory college or association where appropriate.

Timing:

- When the patient arrives to their first appointment or prior to arrival.

Communication / Public Health Standard 3

Wash Your Hands and Any Skin Surface that Will/Has Come in Contact with the Patient

CONDITIONS

Given that the treatment area and the patient are ready for treatment.

TASK

Wash your hands and any skin surface that will/has come in contact with the patient.

STANDARD

Quality / Technical:

- Ensure that soap and water or alcohol based hand sanitizer is used to clean skin surfaces by washing for a minimum of 20 seconds, including all surfaces.

Timing:

- Immediately before and immediately after each patient treatment.

Communication / Public Health Standard 4

Interview the Patient to Obtain Their Treatment Goals

CONDITIONS

In a treatment area, given a patient who comes to you for massage therapy.

TASK

Interview the patient to obtain their treatment goals.

STANDARD

Quality / Technical:

So that your interview questions include:

- Patient's goals for the treatment.
- Limitations to activities of daily life.
- Identification of area(s) patient would like to focus on.
- Discovery of contributing factors.

Quality /Interpersonal:

- So that you give the patient an opportunity to inform you of any specific area(s) to be treated and to relay any information the patient chooses about their treatment goals.
- So that you give the patient an opportunity to ask questions.

Timing:

- Before the massage begins and at any time during the massage.

Communication / Public Health Standard 5

Risk Identification and Management for an Outbreak of Infectious Diseases

CONDITIONS

Given an infectious disease has been identified as a public health risk by the Chief Medical Officer of Health in the community.

TASK

Interview the patient to determine their risk of exposure to the infectious diseases.

STANDARD

Quality / Technical:

- So that you are aware of the symptoms of the infectious disease.
- So that you use a screening tool to identify patients at risk of carrying or at risk from exposure, if available.
- So that you use protective barriers if the status of the patient is unknown.
- So that you clean the clinic area with approved antiseptic cleansers.
- So that you follow any directive issued by the Province or local public health unit.

Quality /Interpersonal:

- So that the patient is informed of the reason for screening and precautions.
- So that you provide the patient with an opportunity to ask questions.

Safety:

- So that patients who are at risk of carrying or at risk from exposure are not treated or are treated in isolation with all surface areas of the clinic area cleansed appropriately directly after treatment to reduce spread of the disease.
- So that a patient is not discriminated against if they are from an identified at risk population.

Timing:

- Prior to the patient entering the clinic space, if possible.
- Prior to providing treatment.

Communication / Public Health Standard 6

Obtain, Update and Record the Patient's Health History

CONDITIONS

In a treatment area, given a patient who comes to you for massage therapy.

TASK

Obtain/update and record the patient's health history.

STANDARD

Quality / Technical:

Health history information must be requested from the patient to identify indications and/or contraindications to treatment. Information requested must include, at the minimum:

- Date on which health history was taken or updated
- General health status
- Patient name, address, date of birth, telephone number, occupation, source of referral
- Name and address of primary care physician
- Current involvement in treatment with other health care practitioner(s)
- Current medication(s) and condition(s) they are treating
- Timing and nature of injuries or accidents
- Timing and nature of surgical procedures
- History of massage therapy
- Primary complaint
- Location and nature of soft tissue and or joint discomfort
- Vision or hearing loss/ loss of sensation
- Possible cardiovascular insufficiency, for example:
 - High blood pressure
 - Low blood pressure
 - Chronic congestive heart failure
 - Heart disease
 - History of myocardial infarction
 - Phlebitis / varicose veins
 - History of cerebro-vascular accident
 - Presence of pacemaker or similar device
- Family history of cardiovascular difficulties
- Possible respiratory insufficiency, for example:
 - Chronic cough
 - Bronchitis
 - Shortness of breath
 - Asthma
 - Emphysema
 - Family history of respiratory difficulties known
- Allergies or hypersensitivity reactions
- Diabetes, cancer, epilepsy, skin conditions
- Arthritis, family history of arthritis
- Presence of infectious conditions for example:
 - Infectious skin conditions
 - Infectious respiratory conditions
 - Hepatitis
 - Hiv
 - Herpes
- Pregnancy, gynaecological conditions
- Other diagnosed diseases or medical conditions, for example: digestive conditions, haemophilia, osteoporosis, mental illness etc.
- Presence of internal pins, wires, artificial joints or special equipment
- History of headaches or migraines

Quality /Interpersonal:

- So that you inform the patient of the need to inform you of any change in their health status.
- So that you inform the patient of the reason why an accurate health history is needed before massage begins.
- So that you provide the patient with an opportunity to ask questions to better understand health history questions being asked.

Communication / Public Health Standard 6 Cont'd...

Obtain, Update and Record the Patient's Health History

- So that you inform the patient that all patient information is confidential and written authorization will be obtained prior to release of information.
- So that you inform the patient that all patient information is confidential within the limits identified in the Confidentiality Statement in the Introduction.
- So that any infectious disease are recognized and Routine and Additional Precautions are taken.

Safety:

- So that you inquire as to any allergies and/or sensitivity to hydrotherapy additives and lubricants that the patient may have.
- So that any contraindications for massage therapy or massage therapy technique(s) are recognized.

Timing:

- Before initial treatment begins.
- After a patient absence of one year from the last treatment.
- Every year, at a minimum.

Communication / Public Health Standard 7

Informed Consent

CONDITIONS

Given that the assessment / reassessment or treatment is ready to begin.

TASK

Obtain the patient's informed consent to perform the assessment / reassessment and treatment.

STANDARD

Quality / Technical:

- So that the treatment is consistent with the massage therapy Scope of Practice and MTAM Policies.
- So that consent is obtained voluntarily.
- So that consent is not obtained through misrepresentation or fraud.

Quality /Interpersonal:

- So that all decisions regarding the initiation of a treatment program will be made jointly with the patient, or when necessary, with the patient's advocate.
- So that the patient is told the nature and purpose of the proposed assessment /reassessment and/or treatment including the areas of the body involved.
- So that the patient is informed of any risks, benefits, possible complications and any contraindications of the assessment / reassessment and/or treatment.
- So that the patient is informed that assessment / reassessment or treatment will be stopped or modified at any time, at their request.
- So that you tell the patient that you will be checking periodically to determine the patient's level of comfort.
- So that the patient is given an opportunity to ask any questions.
- In the event of a finding of incapacity, or the need for a substitute decision maker, refer to the current legislation and MTAM Policies.

Timing:

- Before beginning the assessment/reassessment and / or treatment.
- So that you record informed consent in the patient's clinical record as soon as possible, within 24 hours of treatment.

Communication / Public Health Standard 8

Determine the Patient's Condition by Conducting Assessment/Re-Assessment

CONDITIONS

Given information about a patient's treatment goals, their health history, the patient's consent and/or that on-going treatment is taking place and a scheduled reassessment is due.

TASK

Determine the patient's condition by using history and observation to formulate a clinical impression and conduct (if required) a differential assessment and/or re-assessment to confirm the clinical impression.

STANDARD

Quality / Technical and Safety:

- So that you refer the patient to other health care professionals for conditions that you cannot assess or if the need for referral is indicated in the assessment or re-assessment, for example:
 - ♦ Severe unremitting pain
 - ♦ Severe pain with no history of injury
- The assessment must include an examination of the following (if indicated):
 - ♦ Any acute/ sub acute and chronic conditions and/or any acute or chronic pain, so that it is described as to location, type, duration, origin, pattern, triggering phenomena, intensity and quality.
 - ♦ Central nervous system lesions and/ or conditions.
 - ♦ Peripheral nervous system lesions and/ or conditions.
 - ♦ Range of motion of joints and muscles (active, passive, and resisting) without forcing movements beyond the patient's current abilities.
 - ♦ Flexibility of the soft tissues so that you identify any limitations to movement.
- So that the assessment includes evidence of tenderness, tension, temperature, tone, and texture.
- So that all testing is done bi-laterally.
- So that you identify any physical conditions that are treatable by massage therapy.
- So that you identify any physical conditions that may preclude general or local massage therapy treatment, or require treatment adaptation.
- So that the assessment must include the identification of potential risks associated with massage treatment in the presence of a contraindication.
- So that the effectiveness or completion of the treatment plan can be determined, based on the original goal of treatment.

Timing:

- So that a decision can be made to continue, modify/change, or stop the treatment plan.
- So that the results of the assessment / reassessment are recorded in the patient's health record as soon as possible, within 24 hours of assessment / reassessment.

Communication / Public Health Standard 9

Determine if Massage Therapy Treatment is Indicated

CONDITIONS

Given the patient's completed health history and your assessment of the patient's condition.

TASK

Determine if massage therapy treatment is indicated.

STANDARD

Quality / Technical and Safety:

- So that if there is a contraindication to massage therapy, you refer the patient to another qualified health care professional or that you modify the treatment so that the patient is not put at risk.
- So that any referral that is made is documented in the patient's health record.

Communication / Public Health Standard 10

Treatment and Treatment Plans: Explain the Initial Treatment to the Patient

CONDITIONS

Given that massage therapy treatment is indicated.

TASK

Explain the initial treatment to the Patient.

STANDARD

Quality / Technical:

- So that the treatment is consistent with the massage therapy Scope of Practice and MTAM Policies.
- So that any changes in the patient's wishes regarding consent are obtained before each treatment and are followed.

Quality/ Interpersonal:

- So that the patient is given an opportunity to ask any questions.

Timing:

- Before beginning the treatment.

Treatment and Treatment Plans: Develop and Record an On-Going Treatment Plan

CONDITIONS

Given that on-going massage therapy treatment is indicated, and given the patient's request for treatment and your assessment of the patient's condition.

TASK

Develop and record an on-going treatment plan.

STANDARD

Quality / Technical:

- The plan must include: goals, type and focus of treatment(s), areas of the body to be treated, anticipated frequency and duration of treatments, anticipated patient responses to treatment, schedule for reassessment of the patient's condition, and/or recommended remedial exercises and/or hydrotherapy.
- So that the plan is consistent with the massage therapy Scope of Practice and MTAM Policies.

Communication / Public Health Standard 10 Cont'd...

Treatment and Treatment Plans: Inform the Patient of Any Change in the Treatment Plan

CONDITIONS

Given that the patient informed you of changes in their wishes, physical condition or health status, and/or you identified a change in the patient's condition and/or a lack of patient response to treatment, requiring a change in the treatment plan.

TASK

Inform patient of change in treatment plan.

STANDARD

Quality / Technical:

- So that the information conveyed to the patient includes what the changes to the treatment plan are, and why.
- So that you obtain and record consent from the patient for all changes in treatment.

Quality / Interpersonal:

- So that you ask the patient if they have any questions.
- So that you answer the patient's questions and/or refer them to another health care professional for questions that are not within your area of expertise.

Timing:

- Before continuing with massage treatment.
- Record changes to treatment plan within 24 hours of the treatment.

Communication / Public Health Standard 11

Pre-Treatment & Post-Treatment Protocol

CONDITIONS

Given a patient who has given consent to proceed with treatment.

A. Instruct the Patient

TASK 1

Instruct patient on undressing/dressing procedures.

STANDARD

Quality / Technical / Interpersonal:

- So that you explain to the patient the reasons for the removal of clothing.
- So that you instruct the patient to remove the clothing and items which they are comfortable removing.
- So that you provide the patient with an opportunity to ask questions.
- So that you provide the patient an opportunity to dress/ undress out of the view of the therapist and other people.
- So that you get permission from the patient to re-enter the area.
- If the patient requires assistance to dress / undress themselves the following procedures are followed:
 - So that you inform the patient of those pieces of clothing you will need to remove.
 - So that you remove only those pieces of clothing the patient wants to remove.
 - So that you inform the patient of where you might touch them and why.
 - So that you touch only those areas of the patient's body needed to remove the patient's clothing.
 - So that you record the patient's consent and the assistance provided.
 - So that all efforts are made to maintain respectful privacy of the patient by use of covering, while assisting them to dress/undress.

TASK 2

Instruct patient on treatment positioning and covering.

STANDARD

Quality / Technical:

- So that you obtain patient agreement to the treatment position.
- So that the instructions include how the patient should position their body for treatment.
- So that the patient is advised as to use of the sheets to cover themselves once they are in position for treatment, if they are undressed. (Please see Communication / Public Health Standard 12 re: undraping)
- If the patient requires assistance on or off the massage table:
 - So that you modify the assistance approach to minimize the patient's physical discomfort.
 - So that all efforts are made to maintain respectful privacy of the patient by use of covering, while assisting them in getting on or off the table.

Communication / Public Health Standard 11 Cont'd...

Pre-Treatment & Post-Treatment Protocol

Quality / Interpersonal:

- So that you provide the patient with an opportunity to ask questions.

Safety:

- So that the instructions include any precautions the patient should take to prevent falling off the table.
- So that you prevent the patient from falling.

Timing:

- Before the patient undresses.

Conditions:

- Given that the massage therapy treatment session has been completed.

TASK 3

Instruct patient on when and how to get off the table.

STANDARD

Quality / Technical & Safety:

- So that the instructions include what to do and why.
- So that you ask the patient if they need assistance.
- So that you tell the patient about the possibility of dizziness and light-headedness as a result of getting off the table too quickly.

Timing:

- Before instructing the patient to dress.

B. Select Lubricant to be used, if needed

CONDITIONS

Given a patient positioned for the treatment, the patient's health history pertaining to allergies and the patient's preference.

TASK

Select lubricant to be used, if needed.

STANDARD

Quality / Technical & Safety:

- So that the lubricant selected is not contraindicated for use due to an allergy or the patient's preference.
- So that you ensure contaminant-free dispensing of lubricant.

Communication / Public Health Standard 12

Draping and Positioning: Undrape the Patient for Treatment

CONDITIONS

Given the patient is positioned for the treatment.

TASK

Undrape the patient for treatment.

STANDARD

Quality / Technical and Safety:

- So that the draping is secured.
- So that if the patient requests that the draping be rearranged for their comfort, you accommodate the request as long as professional boundaries are maintained the therapist is not uncomfortable with any body parts being exposed.
- So that female breasts are not exposed except when being treated, in accordance with Technique Standard 15 and 16.
- So that the patient's genitalia or gluteal cleft are not exposed.
- Notwithstanding all the above, it is acceptable for:
 - The accommodation is required to effectively deliver massage therapy services requested by the patient or their designate,
 - The patient or their designate directly request this accommodation,
 - The therapist has ensured that consent is properly obtained with the accommodation recorded, and
 - All reasonable efforts continue to be made by the therapist to ensure privacy and respect for the patient.
- Infants may be treated in an undraped fashion with consent of parent or substitute decision maker.

Quality / Interpersonal:

- So that you inform the patient of what area of the body you will uncover and treat before uncovering.
- So that you enquire as to the patient's comfort and adjust support as necessary.

Draping and Positioning: Instruct and/or Assist the Patient to Change Position

CONDITIONS

Given that you require that the patient change positions during treatment.

TASK

Instruct and/or assist the patient to change position.

STANDARD

Quality / Technical:

- So that the patient is informed on why and how to change position.
- So that the sheets and pillows are secured for patient comfort.
- So that you secure the top sheet to ensure the patient's body is not exposed at any time.

Communication / Public Health Standard 12 Cont'd...

Draping and Positioning: Instruct and/or Assist the Patient to Change Position

Quality / Interpersonal:

- So that the patient is asked about their level of comfort after they are in the new position.
- So that all efforts are made to maintain respectful privacy of the patient by use of covering, while assisting them to change position.

Safety:

- Ensuring that the patient does not fall off the massage equipment while changing position.

Communication / Public Health Standard 13

Recommend Self-Care

CONDITIONS

Given that the massage treatment has been completed and the patient is dressed and that self-care is indicated.

TASK

Recommend self-care.

STANDARD

Quality / Technical:

- So that you explain to the patient appropriate self-care including its intended effect and possible negative reactions.
- So that the patient is informed that if the self-care causes any severe negative reactions the patient is to discontinue its use.
- So that you demonstrate the recommended exercise(s).
- So that you witness that the patient understands the self-care and / or exercise correctly.

Safety:

- So that the self-care and / or exercise does not put the patient at risk.

Timing:

- Before the patient departs.

Communication / Public Health Standard 14

Patient Health Record: Establish and Update Clinical Records for Each Patient

CONDITIONS

Given a massage therapy patient.

TASK

Establish and update clinical records for the patient.

STANDARD

Quality / Technical:

- Records must include:
 - The completed patient health history information.
 - Record of patient's consent to treatment.
 - Records of on-going treatment.
 - Authorization to contact other health care professionals, when contact is required for treatment.
 - Copies of reports pertaining to the patient received from other health care professionals.
- So that records are confidential and are stored so as not to be accessible to unauthorized individuals, and the Personal Health Information Act and its regulations are followed.
- So that records are kept for a minimum of 10 years from the patient's last visit.
- So that if the patient was under 18 years old at the time of their last visit, the records are kept for 10 years after the day they turned (or would have turned) 18.
- So that records are stored in Canada and, if in a digital format, stored on servers based in Canada.

Patient Health Record: Record the Treatment Provided to the Patient

CONDITIONS

Given that a massage session is complete.

TASK

Record the treatment provided to the patient.

STANDARD

Quality / Technical:

So that your records include:

- Date, time and duration of treatment.
- Fee for treatment.
- Results from assessment techniques used by the therapist.
- Summary of techniques used.
- Areas treated.
- Patient reactions/feedback to treatment.
- Informed consent from the patient / substitute decision maker.
- Used and/or recommended remedial exercises, hydrotherapy applications and /or self-care.
- Updated health history and treatment information as obtained.

Communication / Public Health Standard 14 Cont'd...

Patient Health Record: Record the Treatment Provided to the Patient

Timing:

- As soon as possible, within 24-hours of treatment.

Communication / Public Health Standard 15

Use of Personal Protective Equipment During a Treatment

CONDITIONS

- Given a patient or a therapist with a recognizable contagious condition that might be spread by contact or inhalation during the massage therapy treatment.
- Given a patient who requires intra-oral treatment as part of their treatment.
- Given a patient or therapist with non-intact skin, or open or healing lesions that would be vulnerable in the course of providing massage therapy treatment.

TASK

Perform the massage therapy treatment:

- Without spreading infection.
- While using personal protective equipment.

STANDARD

Quality / Interpersonal:

- So that you explain why the use of gloves, masks or suitable alternative or other barrier is necessary or recommended.
- So that the patient is given an opportunity to ask questions.

Quality / Technical:

- So that all requirements of communicable disease control are met.
- So that the affected area on the patient is avoided as much as possible.
- So that the affected area of the therapist's arm, hand, and/or fingers is totally covered to prevent contact.
- So that in the case of an airborne infectious disease both the therapist and the patient wear a mask before, during and after treatment.

Safety:

- So that if these options are not possible or available that the treatment be altered, terminated, or postponed.
- So that the risk of allergies has been discussed and identified.

Timing:

- Before the treatment begins or as soon as the situation arises during treatment.

Communication / Public Health Standard 16

Discharge of a Patient

CONDITIONS

If the goals of the treatment plan have been met or cannot be met and/or if the needs of the patient are beyond the skill, abilities or scope of practice of the massage therapist and/ or if the patient is abusive.

TASK

Discharge the patient.

STANDARD

Quality / Interpersonal:

- So that you explain to the patient the reason for the discharge.
- So that the discharge discussion is initiated before or after the final treatment but not during the treatment.
- So that the patient is given an opportunity to ask questions.

Quality / Technical

- So that a referral is arranged prior to discharge if necessary or appropriate.
- So that the patient files are transferred or stored according to the patient's wishes.

Timing

- So that sufficient notice is given to the patient.

Technique Standard 1

Introduction to the Standards for Specific Massage Therapy Techniques

There are Standards that apply in general to the performance of massage therapy techniques. These Standards are addressed on this page. These “General” Standards are to be met in the performance of all techniques in massage therapy treatment.

CONDITIONS

Given that the patient’s treatment plan includes one or more massage therapy techniques.

TASK

Perform the technique(s) correctly and in such a way that they are well integrated in the treatment, and that the treatment plan is executed with the patient’s consent and is consistent with the principles of massage.

STANDARD

Quality / Interpersonal:

- So that you do not use a technique, or continue its use, if the patient indicates a preference not to use it.
- So that you make the patient aware that some techniques may be painful, depending on how they are applied and the condition being treated.
- So that you treat within the patient’s pain tolerance, and you give the patient the opportunity to inform you of his/her pain level within a mutually agreed upon range of acceptable pain.

Quality / Technical:

So that the four basic principles of massage are applied:

- Superficial, deep, superficial
- General, specific, general
- Proximal, distal, proximal
- Peripheral, central, peripheral

Technique Standard 2

Perform a Stroking Technique

CONDITIONS

Given that the patient's treatment plan indicates the need for stroking technique.

TASK

Perform a stroking technique.

STANDARD

Quality / Technical:

- So that stroking is performed through patient's covering or directly on the skin.
- So that if the purpose of stroking is to achieve a relaxation effect the technique is soothing, slow, and even.
- So that if the purpose of stroking is to achieve a stimulating effect the technique is brisk.

Safety:

- So that stroking is not used or is modified if a contraindication to this technique exists.

Technique Standard 3

Perform a Rocking or Shaking Technique

CONDITIONS

Given that the patient's treatment plan indicates the need for rocking and / or shaking technique.

TASK

Perform a rocking or shaking technique.

STANDARD

Quality / Technical:

- So that you rock to create movement around a joint and shake to move the soft tissue.

Safety:

- So that you treat within the patient's agreed upon pain tolerance.
- So that you take special precaution, based on your assessment, with any patient who is prone to joint subluxation/dislocation, or joint disease, inflammation or effusion or compromised integrity of the adjoining soft tissue.
- So that rocking or shaking is not used or is modified if a contraindication to this technique exists.

Technique Standard 4

Perform an Effleurage Technique

CONDITIONS

Given that the patient's treatment plan indicates the need for effleurage technique.

TASK

Perform an effleurage technique.

STANDARD

Quality / Technical:

- So that the direction of movement is generally towards the heart.
- So that the movement is broad and general, and proportional to the part of the body being worked on.

Safety:

- So that effleurage is not used or is modified if a contraindication to this technique exists.

Technique Standard 5

Perform a Petrissage Technique

CONDITIONS

Given that the patient's treatment plan indicates the need for petrissage technique.

TASK

Perform a petrissage technique.

STANDARD

Quality / Technical:

- So that the tissues are compressed and released in a rhythmical fashion.
- So that the tissue layers are kneaded and stretched relative to each other.

Safety:

- So that petrissage is not used or is modified if a contraindication to this technique exists.

Technique Standard 6

Perform a Friction Technique

CONDITIONS:

Given that the patient's treatment plan indicates the need for friction therapy.

TASK

Perform a friction technique.

STANDARD

Quality / Technical:

- So that the tissues are warmed and stretched before the technique is applied.
- So that your fingers do not glide over the patient's skin.
- So that friction is performed specifically on the site of an adhesion or lesion.
- So that following the application of friction, the fibres are stretched.

Quality / Interpersonal

- So that you inform the patient that friction may be painful.
- So that you inquire as to the patient's comfort with regard to the level of pressure and pain.
- So that you stop or modify treatment immediately when the patient indicates an unexpected increase in pain or a positive change in the tissue.

Safety:

- So that following the application of a friction technique where inflammation is a response, ice is applied to the friction site following the stretch.
- So that medication history is considered before applying frictions.
- So that friction is not used or is modified if a contraindication to this technique exists.

Technique Standard 7

Perform a Vibration Technique

CONDITIONS:

Given that the patient's treatment plan indicates the need for vibration technique.

TASK

Perform a vibration technique.

STANDARD

Quality / Technical:

- So that when you perform static vibrations your whole hand or part thereof is in continuous contact with the patient's body without sliding over the patient's skin.
- So that when you perform running vibrations your whole hand or part thereof is in continuous contact with the patient's body with a slight glide over the patient's skin.

Safety:

- So that vibration is not used or is modified if a contraindication to this technique exists.

Technique Standard 8

Perform a Percussive Technique

CONDITIONS

Given that the patient's treatment plan indicates the need for percussive technique.

TASK

Perform a percussive technique.

STANDARD

Quality / Technical:

- So that the technique is percussive and rhythmic.
- So that when you perform light percussive techniques your hands are light and springy and do not create force below the skin surface.
- So that when you perform heavy percussive techniques your hands are firm and apply force below the skin surface.

Safety:

- So that any heavy percussive technique is not performed over any bony prominence, the kidneys, abdomen or any fragile tissue.
- So that percussion is not used or is modified if a contraindication to this technique exists.

Technique Standard 9

Apply Fascial/Myofascial Techniques

CONDITIONS:

Given that the patient's treatment plan indicates the need for a fascial technique.

TASK

Apply fascial techniques.

STANDARD

Quality / Technical:

- So that the technique engages fascia and results in increased mobility and flexibility of tissue.
- So that the tissues are warmed and stretched before and soothed after the technique is applied.

Quality / Interpersonal:

- So that you inform the patient that fascial techniques may be painful.
- So that you inquire as to the patient's comfort with regard to the level of pressure and pain.
- So that you stop or modify treatment immediately when the patient indicates an unexpected increase in pain or a positive change in the tissue.

Safety:

- So that medication history is considered before applying fascial techniques.
- So that fascial techniques are not used or are modified if a contraindication to these techniques exists.

Technique Standard 10

Apply Trigger Point Techniques

CONDITIONS:

Given the patient's treatment plan indicates the possibility that trigger points may be present.

TASK

Identify trigger points.

STANDARD

Quality / Technical:

So that trigger points are identified correctly, as indicated by at least two of:

- Local tenderness within a taut band of muscle.
- Local twitch response, and/or a patient's report of referred pain.
- Tenderness, or autonomic phenomenon pattern.

Quality / Interpersonal:

- So that you stop the assessment of trigger points immediately if the patient requests.

Treat Trigger Points

CONDITIONS:

Given that a trigger point has been identified.

TASK

Treat trigger points.

STANDARD

Quality / Technical:

- So that the treatment technique is applied until the patient tells you the level of referred pain either decreases or is eliminated.
- So that you discontinue the technique if the referred pain does not diminish.
- So that following the treatment of the trigger point the treated muscle is stretched.

Quality / Interpersonal:

- So that the patient is informed that the treatment of trigger points may be painful.
- So that you treat within the patient's agreed upon pain tolerance.

Safety:

- So that treatment of trigger points is not used or is modified if a contraindication to this technique exists.

Technique Standard 11

Apply Low-Grade Joint Mobilization - Sustained Grade I or II or Grade I or II Oscillations

CONDITIONS:

Given that the patient's treatment plan indicates a need to maintain joint ROM and/or decrease joint pain.

TASK

Apply low-grade joint mobilization.

STANDARD

Quality / Technical:

- So that the joint is in a loose-pack position.
- So that the joint is taken up to the elastic barrier but not beyond, within the patient's pain tolerance.

Safety:

- So that you assess the joint for pain prior to treatment by using a gentle, controlled traction.
- So that you treat the patient within their agreed upon pain tolerance.
- So that you perform a gentle traction where possible before doing any gliding movements.
- So that low-grade joint mobilization is not used or is modified if a contraindication to this technique exists.

Technique Standard 12

Apply High-Grade Joint Mobilization - Sustained Grade II or III or Grade III and IV Oscillations

CONDITIONS:

Given that the patient's treatment plan indicates a need to increase inert tissue elongation through joint mobilization.

TASK

Apply high-grade joint mobilization.

STANDARD

Quality / Technical:

- So that the tissues around the joint is warmed and stretched prior to joint mobilization.
- So that the directions of mobilization are correct for that specific capsular pattern.
- So that the joint is in a loose-pack position.
- So that the joint is taken to the end of its physiological range of motion, and then slightly beyond the physiological range of motion, within the patient's comfort level.
- So that the accessory movement and physiological movements may be improved.
- So that high velocity low amplitude thrust techniques are not used to the spine.

Safety:

- So that you assess the joint for pain prior to treatment by using a gentle, controlled traction.
- So that you treat within the patient's agreed upon pain tolerance.
- So that you take special precaution, based on your assessment, with any patient who is prone to joint subluxation/dislocation, or joint disease, inflammation or effusion or compromised integrity of the adjoining soft tissue.
- So that high-grade joint mobilization is not used or is modified if a contraindication to this technique exists.

Technique Standard 13

Perform a Stretch Technique

CONDITIONS:

Given that the patient's treatment plan indicates the need for a stretch technique.

TASK

Perform a stretch technique.

STANDARD

Quality / Technical:

- So that the soft tissue is lengthened within the patient's pain tolerance.
- So that the stretch is held without bouncing until there is a release in the tissue being stretched, or the therapist deems the stretch completed.

Safety:

- So that a stretch technique is not used or is modified if a contraindication to this technique exists.
- So that you do not stretch an unstable structure or tissue.

Technique Standard 14

Perform an Intra-Oral Treatment

CONDITIONS

Given that the patient's treatment plan indicates the need for intra-oral treatment.

TASK

Perform intra-oral treatment.

STANDARD

Quality / Technical:

- So that you never treat past the larynx.

Quality/ Interpersonal:

- So that you set up a non-verbal signal from the patient with regard to pain and comfort level.

Safety:

- So that you use protective barriers for the entire hand while treating in the mouth.
- So that treatment is discontinued if the patient indicates.
- So that intra-oral treatment is not used or is modified if a contraindication to this treatment exists.

Technique Standard 15

Perform Breast Massage

CONDITIONS:

Given that breast massage is requested or clinically indicated prior to treatment, and that the patient has specifically consented to breast massage.

CLINICAL INDICATORS CONCERNING THE BREAST

- General drainage problems
- Pre/post menstrual pain
- Breast swelling and/or congestion
- Discomforts of pregnancy and/or lactation
- Blocked milk ducts (contraindicated if mastitis)
- Pre/post surgery including breast augmentation or reduction
- Symptomatic relief of pain
- Promotion of good quality scarring and relief of adhered/restrictive/painful scarring
- Common benign breast conditions
- Assistance with breast health
- Discomfort from cancer treatment
- Rehabilitation from cancer treatment

TASK

Perform breast massage.

STANDARD

Quality / Technical & Interpersonal:

- So that you do not touch the nipple and/or areola.
- So that the breast tissue is uncovered only when it is being treated directly (notwithstanding clause in Communication / Public Health Standard 12 applies).
- So that breast massage is not performed or is modified if a contraindication to this treatment exists.

Safety

- So that vigorous techniques are not used when breast implants are present.
- So that consent was obtained in accordance with Communication / Public Health Standard 7.

Technique Standard 16

Perform Massage to the Chest Wall

CONDITIONS:

Given that massage to structures of the chest wall has been requested or clinically indicated prior to treatment, and that the patient has consented to the treatment plan.

CLINICAL INDICATORS CONCERNING CHEST WALL MUSCULATURE

including but not limited to:

- Post-mastectomy
- Rehabilitation after cancer treatment
- Chronic respiratory conditions
- Relief of muscular discomfort and/or pain
- Supportive treatment of postural rebalancing
- Scarring of the tissue of the chest wall

TASK

Provide treatment to structures of the chest wall.

STANDARD

Quality / Technical:

- So that the chest/breast is uncovered only with the prior and voluntary consent of the patient (notwithstanding clause in Communication / Public Health Standard 12 applies).

Safety:

- So that structures of the chest wall are not treated or that treatment is modified if contraindications to treatment of this area exist.

Technique Standard 17

Apply Hydrotherapy and Thermal Therapy Treatments

CONDITIONS:

Given that the patient's treatment plan indicates a need to use hydrotherapy and/or thermal therapy.

TASK

Apply hydrotherapy and or thermal therapy.

STANDARD

Quality / Technical & Interpersonal:

- So that you describe to the patient how the hydrotherapy application would be performed, including its intended effect and possible negative reactions.
- So that you provide the patient with an opportunity to ask questions.
- So that you regularly observe the patient's physical reactions and inquire as to the patient's comfort.
- So that the hydrotherapy treatment is pre-tested on a small area (patch test) if there is any concern about the patient's ability to tolerate the temperature or type of application.
- So that the size, intensity and duration of treatment is determined according to the patient's general health status and indications in the case.
- So that you provide the patient with a rest period following large or intense applications.
- So that the equipment manufacturer's specifications are followed correctly and a maintenance log is kept.
- So that the equipment is cleaned and maintained in accordance with infection control requirements.

Safety:

- So that the applications used are not contraindicated due to the patient's condition.
- So that applications are modified if necessary, due to the patient's condition.
- So that you regularly observe the patient's response to treatment and remain available for treatment alteration.
- So that if the medical history of the patient indicates a high risk of any negative reaction, constant supervision is maintained.
- So that if any negative reactions are identified, treatment is modified or stopped.
- So that hygienic conditions are maintained at all times.

Additional Technique Standard 1

Introduction to the Standards for Specific Additional Massage Therapy Techniques

These are Standards that apply in general to the performance of additional massage therapy techniques. These “General” Standards are to be met in the performance of all additional techniques in a massage therapy treatment. Not all massage therapists will have the training required to perform all or any of these additional techniques. Massage therapists are responsible for ensuring that they have the necessary knowledge and skills to perform an additional technique safely.

CONDITIONS:

Given that the patient’s treatment plan includes one or more additional massage therapy techniques.

TASK

Perform the technique(s) correctly and in such a way that they are well integrated in the treatment, and that the treatment plan is executed with the patient’s consent, and all aspects of the modality in use are within the scope of practice.

STANDARD

Quality / Interpersonal:

- So that you explain the treatment plan and receive consent in accordance with Communication / Public Health Standards 7 and 10.
- So that you do not use a technique, or continue its use, if the patient indicates a preference not to use it.
- So that you make the patient aware that some techniques may be painful, depending on how they are applied and the condition being treated.
- So that you treat within the patient’s pain tolerance, and you give the patient the opportunity to inform you of his/her pain level within a mutually agreed upon range of acceptable pain.

Quality / Technical:

- So that you ensure that you have the necessary knowledge, skill and judgement to use the additional massage therapy technique.
- So that you do not practice the additional massage therapy technique if you do not have the educational qualifications.

Additional Technique Standard 2

Perform an Acupuncture Treatment

CONDITIONS:

Given that the patient's treatment plan indicates that acupuncture treatment may be appropriate and the patient has consented to receiving acupuncture.

TASK

Perform acupuncture.

STANDARD

Quality / Technical:

- So that you are current in your qualifications to practice acupuncture as a massage therapy modality, including meeting minimum education requirements established by the Massage Therapy Association of Manitoba.
- So that you do not perform an acupuncture treatment or technique in which you are not qualified to perform or which is beyond the scope of your education, training, capabilities, experience, and scope of practice.

Quality / Interpersonal:

- So that you inform the patient of the potential risks and reactions to the treatment.
- So that you inquire as to the patient's comfort with regard to the acupuncture and any pain or discomfort during treatment.
- So that you stop or modify treatment immediately when the patient indicates an unexpected increase in pain.
- So that you do not use a technique or continue its use if the patient indicates a preference not to use it.
- So that you make the patient aware that some techniques may be painful, depending on how they are applied and the condition being treated.

Safety:

- So that you are aware that there are always potential risks associated with the practice of acupuncture. Serious adverse events of acupuncture include but are not limited to: infection, puncturing injury to vital organs, damage to major vessels and nerves. Safety in acupuncture requires constant vigilance in maintaining high standards of cleanliness, sterilization, aseptic technique and careful anatomical considerations.
- So that the needles and guide tubes used for treatment are single-use, pre-packaged, pre-sterilized, unexpired, manufactured for use in acupuncture, intended for the specific kind of acupuncture being performed, and disposed of properly at the end of the treatment.
- So that the number of needles inserted into the patient reconciles with the number of needles removed from the patient.

References:

- Policy on Acupuncture
- Policy on Approved Acupuncture Education Programs