



## **Standard of Practice: Client-centred Care**

**Date:** January 1, 2024

**Amended:**

### **Client outcome**

The client is meaningfully engaged in decision making for their massage therapy care, and feels comfortable sharing their history, needs, and views in order to help guide their treatment plan.

### **Registered Massage Therapist outcome**

The Registered Massage Therapist (RMT) provides massage therapy that is focused on the best interests and unique needs, views, preferences, and concerns of each individual client, ensuring the client is actively involved in decision making regarding their care.

### **Requirements**

The RMT must:

1. Obtain the client's informed consent prior to conducting an assessment, providing treatment, or modifying a treatment plan. Consent must include a discussion with the client about the following elements:
  - The nature of the treatment;
  - The areas of the body to be treated;
  - The expected benefits;
  - Risks and side effects;

- Alternative courses of action;
  - Likely consequences of not having treatment; and
  - The client's right to ask questions about the information provided, and that assessment or treatment will be stopped or modified at any time at their request.
2. Have an awareness that there are parts of the body which may be considered to be sensitive areas for some clients (for example, the chest wall, upper inner thigh, and gluteal region). These areas are discussed as part of the informed consent but do not require additional consent, with the exception of breast massage. Breasts must not be touched, except when assessment and/or treatment of the breast is requested by the client for a clinically indicated reason (for example, surgical intervention or prenatal and perinatal care). Additional informed consent for the breast must be obtained and documented prior to each treatment.
  3. Promote the client's involvement in their own health goals by considering client input and supporting their informed decision making in all aspects of client care.
  4. Using the RMTs' knowledge, skills, and professional judgement, obtain a health history and assess the client, to determine the client's condition and whether massage therapy is indicated for treatment.
  5. Develop a treatment plan for each client based on the assessment and client's goals for treatment, monitor the client's response, and modify treatment accordingly.
  6. Integrate an evidence-informed approach to care using professional knowledge, experience and practice evaluation, external research, client perspective, and practice context.
  7. Only treat, or attempt to treat, conditions within the RMT's competence and the Scope of Practice of Massage Therapy.
  8. If the RMT has dual professional designation, ensure the client understands when and in what circumstances care is being provided within the Scope of Practice of Massage Therapy, and when care is being provided within the scope of another health profession.
  9. When appropriate, and with the client's consent, consult or refer the client to another RMT, health-care professional, or person whose expertise can best address the client's needs.
  10. Provide fair and equitable access and consistent quality of care to all clients.
  11. Treat all clients with respect and dignity.

12. Ensure the client's continuing comfort and safety during the treatment, addressing any intended and unintended effects and outcomes as required.
  13. Drape in accordance with the Standard of Practice: Draping and Physical Privacy.
  14. Work with the client and others, as required, to plan and implement discharge from care.
  15. Only discontinue providing care to a client if the discharge process has been documented in the client's file and:
    - Treatment is no longer needed; or
    - The client requests the discontinuation; or
    - Alternative services are arranged; or
    - The client is abusive or is a real or perceived threat to the RMT and the RMT has made all reasonable attempts to arrange alternative services; or
    - The client is given a reasonable opportunity to arrange alternative services.
1. Never abuse a client; this includes, but is not limited to, verbal, physical, psychological, emotional, sexual, or financial abuse.
  2. Never have a sexual relationship with a client. This is sexual abuse. As it pertains to sexual abuse, a client will meet the definition of "client" for one year after they cease to be the RMT's client. That is, an RMT may not enter into a sexual relationship with a client, for a period of one year after the client ceases to be a massage therapy client. Additionally, it might never be ethically appropriate to have a sexual relationship with a person who was previously a client, regardless of the passage of time, due to power dynamics, the disclosing of health information, or other reasons. Even if this might not constitute "sexual abuse" within the definition, it could still be professional misconduct.
  3. With the client's request and written consent, securely transfer copies of the client's health record to another RMT or other health-care professional. Secure transfer includes sending by courier or registered mail, in-person pick up, or electronic means.
  4. Upon resignation, or closure of a clinic, refer the client to another RMT, health-care professional, or person whose expertise can best address the client's needs; and take necessary actions to ensure client health records are properly retained, transferred, and/or disposed of.

## **Relevant documents**

- Code of Ethics
- Dual Health Professional Policy
- Guide to Evidence-informed Practice for Massage Therapists
- Maintaining Boundaries and Preventing Sexual Abuse Guidelines
- Maintenance of Client Records Policy
- Personal Information Protection Policy
- Standard of Practice: Draping and Physical Privacy
- Standard of Practice: Consent
- Standard of Practice: Collaboration and Professional Relationships
- Standard of Practice: Maintaining Boundaries and Preventing Sexual Abuse
- Standard of Practice: Techniques for the Treatment of Vulnerable Populations and Complex Conditions