

# COLLEGE OF PHYSICAL THERAPISTS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

## ADVISORY STATEMENT

**Number 4**

**Effective: April 1, 2008**

**Replaces: Clinical Practice Statement No. 5 Private  
Physical Therapy Practice/Corporations  
December 1996**

### CONDUCTING A CLINICAL PHYSICAL THERAPY PRACTICE

#### Overview

All physical therapists working in a physical therapy practice have a responsibility to ensure that the standards of the profession are met to ensure the effective provision of services to patients in a safe and clean environment. In addition to the components required for a physical therapy practice outlined below, physical therapists must work in accordance with College regulation (including Bylaws relating to Liability Insurance, Code of Ethics, Minimal Treatment Standards, Business Practice Standards, Advertising Standards, Access to Health Care Records, Registrant Records, Practice Standards, and Advisory Statements), and the provincial *Personal Information Protection Act* (PIPA), and the *Freedom of Information Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIPPA).

The following guidelines are intended for privately-owned clinical practice, hospital/institutional department, or home-care clinical practice as applicable.

#### Staffing

1. The use of physical therapist support workers will be in accordance with the Practice Standard on Assignment of Task to Physical Therapy Support Workers.

#### Physical Facilities

1. Ensure adequate space is available for reception and waiting areas, for individual assessment and/or treatment, for group activities such as exercise, for staff to complete documentation requirements and for the storage of client records.
2. Provide privacy for clients and staff when there is a need to change clothing before or after treatment.
3. Adequate visual and auditory privacy should be provided for all assessments and treatments.

#### Equipment

1. The amount and type of equipment is dependent on the type and size of the practice.
2. Gowns and sheets must be available to provide adequate draping for clients in accordance with the Practice Standard on Draping for Patients.
3. Make available sufficient linen including towels, sheets and pillow cases to maintain current infection control standards. See the Practice Standard on Infection Control.

## **Safety**

1. Equipment maintained consistently on a regular-scheduled basis, and a written record must be kept of all repair and maintenance services (e.g. cleaned regularly, in good repair and calibrated as per manufacturer's instructions and the Practice Standard on Electro-physical Agents).
2. Maintain a written record of all repair and maintenance services.
3. Store equipment in a safe and accessible manner and away from public walkways or hallways.
4. Supervise clients at all times, making call bells or another type of alarm system available for clients who are not under direct visual supervision.

## **Client Scheduling**

1. Appointment records clearly show appointments made, cancellations, missed appointments, and the actual attendance for each day, and are kept in accordance with the clinical record retention requirement of the Practice Standard on Clinical Records.
2. Client attendance is clearly shown in the individual client's clinical record in accordance with Practice Standard on Clinical Records, and may also be recorded in the physical therapist's day planner/journal.
3. Appointment scheduling ensures that client waiting times are reasonable.

## **Policies and Procedures**

1. Written policies and procedures should be available in order to provide orientation to new staff members and to provide direction to all staff members regarding the expectations for performance based on established guidelines and legal requirements.
2. Policies and procedures should be kept current and all staff should be advised of any additions, deletions and/or other revisions as early on in the process as possible, but at least as soon as these are implemented.
3. Although the owner(s) are responsible for policies and procedures and their documentation, participation of staff in the maintenance and review process is beneficial to all parties in promoting an increased understanding of the issues and of appropriate strategies to address these. The physical therapist is responsible for ensuring that all policies and procedures are in accordance with College policies.

The following are suggested policies and procedures, which may be included in a manual for any physiotherapy service:

- (a) Organization and Objectives of the Service
  - Overall statement
  - Organizational plan (reporting relationships)

(b) Personnel Policies

- Role descriptions for all staff, professional, non-professional and volunteers
- Registration requirements for practice
- Staff orientation procedures
- Staff identification
- Probationary period and performance appraisal system
- Hours of work and pay periods
- Illness, vacation, leaves of absences, resignation
- Dress and smoking codes where applicable

(c) Resources

- Equipment available for treatment
- Equipment calibration, maintenance and repair
- Equipment/devices available for loan and/or purchase
- Ordering of supplies, storage, photocopying, keys for the practice
- Lost and found

(d) Client Care and Administration

- Business license
- Consent forms
- Appointments scheduling and prioritization system for waiting lists
- Assessment and treatment record standards, sample forms, retention requirements
- Billing procedures (e.g. WCB, ICBC, Extended Health Insurance, private payment, equipment loan and/or purchase)
- The fee schedule
- Cancellations/absences and the charges involved
- Communication with other health-care professionals including referrals
- Legal reports
- Discharge and cross referrals
- Confidentiality
- Home visiting
- Workload statistics

(e) Fire, Safety and Hygiene

- Emergency procedures and telephone numbers
- Client incident reports and employee accident reports
- Operation of fire-related equipment
- Sterilization techniques
- Hygiene and housekeeping including Infection Control and Standard Precautions
- WHMIS (Workplace Hazardous Materials Information Systems)
- WorkSafe BC coverage for all workers as per WorkSafe BC guidelines

(f) Professional Conduct

- College Reference Guide including regulation, bylaws, practice standards, and advisory statements
- Relevant Acts (e.g. *Health Professions Act*, *Health Care Consent and Facilities Admissions Act*, *Infant's Act*, *PIPA*, *FOIPPA*, *Motor Vehicle Act*, *Workers Compensation Act*, *Hospital's Act*)

- (g) Treatment Protocols
  - Specific assessment standards and treatment regimes (e.g. post surgical management, modalities, exercise testing)
  - Exercise and information sheets, pamphlets and brochures
- (h) Continuing Education
  - Arrangements for attending courses, staff coverage, payment and recording of courses
  - In-service education and library arrangements, journals, internet access
- (i) Student/Residents/Interns
  - Responsibility for supervision
  - Program curriculum, evaluation forms, feedback, reporting
- (j) Quality Management
  - Philosophy, audit procedures, peer assessments, client feedback surveys

Aknowledgements:

The College of Physical Therapists of BC would like to acknowledge the College of Physiotherapists of Ontario for their permission to adapt the Guideline - Conducting a Clinical Physiotherapy Practice (1998).