



Standards of Practice

Amended January 1, 2022



Massage Therapist Association of Alberta

Standards of Practice

Standards of Practice

The Massage Therapist Association of Alberta (MTAA) has developed the Standards of Practice for members based on the approved Core Competency guidelines. Through the development and use of these Standards the MTAA continues to display its commitment to serving its members and promoting the highest possible quality of massage therapy practice in a safe, competent and ethical manner.

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 is determined by the minimum competencies taught through the educational institutions. MTAA members must perform only those massage therapy techniques that they have been adequately trained to perform, and should exercise their professional judgement in applying these Standards of Practice to each individual client situation.

The Standards of Practice have been adapted to be specific to the MTAA and form a live, dynamic document that will evolve as changes in practice evolve. Special acknowledgement is extended to the College of Massage Therapists of Ontario (CMTO) for their framework.

Purpose

The Standards of Practice have been developed to provide practice guidelines which all MTAA members are responsible for following. These Standards serve as a reference tool for:

- MTAA members
- Massage therapy educators
- MTAA Board of Directors
- MTAA Complaints and Discipline Committees
- Professional colleagues, including other health care providers
- The public, by providing objective standards by which to assess the quality of treatment.

Confidentiality Statement

Massage therapists are advised that giving information about a client to any person except as required or allowed by law without the client's expressed consent is considered to be professional misconduct.

Accountability for Standards

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

Massage therapists are also accountable to the following pieces of legislation:

- *Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA)*
- *Health Information Act (HIA)*



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Glossary of Terms:

A Standard of Practice consists of three inter-related subcomponents that describe:

Conditions:

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

Task:

A task is a description of what an MTAA member is expected to accomplish.

Standard:

A standard is a description of a minimum level of performance one is required to demonstrate in the achievement of a task.

A standard is stated in observable and measurable terms. It must be precise and clear to the member who is held accountable for accomplishing it. It must also be clear to the clients and the public (who assess the massage 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



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Standard 1

Category: CLIENT COMMUNICATION

Ratified: June 5, 2011
Amended: January 1, 2022
Rescinded:

Prepare the Treatment Area

Conditions:

In a treatment area, using disinfecting products, cleaning materials, massage equipment, and freshly laundered linen.

Task:

Prepare the treatment area.

Standard:

Quality / Technical:

- Ensure that the room and equipment surfaces have been cleaned and/or disinfected in accordance with Alberta Health Services' recommendations.
- So that you use only sheets, towels, and any other linens that have been freshly laundered.
- So that any linens that come in contact with the client have not been used by a prior client.
- So that linen used for draping will allow for full coverage of the client.

Safety:

- So that any mirrors in the treatment room are not placed in any location that would allow the massage therapist to view, or result in the client perceiving that the massage therapist may view the client's exposed body.
- So that there is adequate lighting in the room to allow the client to safely get on and off the table.
- So that the linens and pillows do not interfere with the client's ability to get on and off the table.
- So that any obstacle or substance that could make the floor slippery is removed from the treatment room to prevent accidental falls.
- So that equipment is properly maintained, and that manufacturer's instructions are followed correctly.
- So that the transference of infectious diseases is prevented as much as possible.

Timing:

- Prior to the client entering the treatment area.



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Standard 2

Category: CLIENT COMMUNICATION

Ratified: September 13, 2008

Amended: January 1, 2022

Rescinded:

Interview the Client to Obtain Their Treatment Goals

Conditions:

In a treatment area, given a client is seeking massage therapy services.

Task:

Interview the client to obtain their treatment goals.

Standard:

Quality / Technical:

- So that your interview questions include:
 - client's goals for the treatment.
 - limitations to activities of daily life.
 - identification of area(s) client would like to focus on.
 - discovery of contributing factors.

Quality /Interpersonal:

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

Timing:

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



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Standard 3

Category: CLIENT COMMUNICATION

Ratified: September 13, 2008

Amended: January 1, 2022

Rescinded:

Informed Consent

Conditions:

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

Task:

Obtain the client's consent to perform the assessment/re-assessment or treatment.

Standard:

Quality / Technical:

- So that the proposed assessment/re-assessment or treatment is consistent with the MTAA Scope of Practice, indicated according to the client's presentation, and in the client's best interest.
- So that consent is obtained voluntarily.
- So that consent is not obtained through misrepresentation or fraud.
- So that the massage therapist identifies and consults with an appropriate co-decision or substitute decision maker if the capacity of an adult client is questioned or not present.
- So that if the client is under the age of 18, the massage therapist:
 - Determines whether the client has capacity to be considered a mature minor by considering:
 - Their age and maturity.
 - The reason for treatment and what the treatment plan involves.
 - The areas of the body, disrobing and draping involved.
 - Whether the minor client understands the information provided and how it applies to them.
 - When necessary, identifies, consults with, and obtains consent from the client's parent(s) or legal guardian(s).

Quality/Interpersonal:

- So that all information presented to the client is explained using language that is appropriate to that client's level of understanding.
- So that the client is told the nature and purpose of the proposed assessment/re-assessment and/or treatment including the areas of the body involved, and options for positioning, disrobing and draping.
- So that the client is informed of any risks, benefits, possible complications and any contraindications of the assessment/re-assessment and/or treatment.
- So that the client is informed that assessment/re-assessment or treatment will be stopped or modified at any time, at their request.
- So that the massage therapist informs the client that they will be checking periodically to determine the client's level of comfort.
- So that the client is given time to consider their options and given an opportunity and encouragement to ask any questions.



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Safety:

- So that the massage therapist ceases the action being taken if the client withdraws their consent at any time.
- So that the massage therapist is aware of and responds to any non-verbal cues or indications that the client wishes to modify or revoke consent.

Timing:

- Before beginning the assessment/re-assessment and/or treatment.
- Any time there is a change in the client's condition or the treatment plan.
- So that you record informed consent in the client's clinical record as soon as possible, within 24 hours of treatment, and includes information regarding:
 - If capacity was questioned, reasons why, and what actions were taken to identify a co-decision or substitute decision maker.
 - The areas of the body involved.
 - If consent was refused or revoked and any reasons provided by the client.



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Standard 4

Category: CLIENT COMMUNICATION

Ratified: September 13, 2008

Amended: January 1, 2022

Rescinded:

Determine the Client's Condition by Conducting an Assessment/Re-Assessment

Conditions:

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

Task:

Determine the client's condition by using history and observation to formulate a clinical impression and if indicated, conduct a differential assessment and/or re-assessment to confirm the clinical impression.

Standard:

Quality / Interpersonal

- So that you discontinue the assessment if requested by the client.
- So that the Boundaries Standards are followed if undressing or undraping is required prior to, during or following conducting the assessment/re-assessment.

Quality / Technical and Safety:

- So that you refer the client 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 client'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 includes 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.
- So that a decision can be made to continue, modify/change, or stop the treatment plan.



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- So that the results of the assessment/re-assessment are recorded in the client's health record as soon as possible, within 24 hours of assessment/re-assessment.



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Standard 5

Category: CLIENT COMMUNICATION

Ratified: September 13, 2008

Amended: January 1, 2022

Rescinded:

Determine if Massage Therapy Treatment is Indicated

Conditions:

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

Task:

Determine if massage therapy treatment is indicated.

Standard:

Quality / Technical:

- So that the massage therapist uses the information gathered to formulate a professional opinion in the best interest of the client.
- So that the process of determining whether massage therapy treatment is indicated, and any referral that is made is documented in the client's health record.

Safety:

- So that the massage therapist modifies the proposed treatment plan to account for any relevant precautions or contraindications.
- So that the massage therapist refers the client to an appropriate and qualified health care provider if massage therapy treatment is not indicated.

Timing:

- Prior to formulating a treatment plan and proceeding with massage therapy treatment.



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Standard 6

Category: CLIENT COMMUNICATION

Ratified: September 13, 2008
Amended: January 1, 2022
Rescinded:

Treatment and Treatment Plans

Explain the Initial Treatment to the Client

Conditions:

Given that massage therapy treatment is indicated.

Task:

Explain the proposed initial treatment to the client as well as the rationale.

Standard:

Quality / Technical:

- So that the treatment is consistent with the MTAA Scope of Practice.
- So that any changes in the client's wishes regarding consent are obtained before each treatment and are followed.

Quality/ Interpersonal:

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

Timing:

- Before beginning the treatment.

Develop and Record an On-Going Treatment Plan

Conditions:

Given that on-going massage therapy treatment is indicated and given the client's request for treatment and your assessment of the client'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 client responses to treatment, schedule for reassessment of the client's condition, and/or recommended homecare.
- So that the plan is consistent with the MTAA Scope of Practice.

Timing:

- After the first massage treatment and update whenever treatment plan is altered.



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Inform the Client of Any Change in the Treatment Plan

Conditions:

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

Task:

Inform client of the proposed change in treatment plan as well as the rationale.

Standard:

Quality / Interpersonal

- So that you ask the client if they have any questions.
- So that you answer the client's questions and/or refer them to another health care professional for questions that are not within the massage therapist's Scope of Practice.

Quality / Technical:

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

Timing:

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



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Standard 7

Category: CLIENT COMMUNICATION

Ratified: September 13, 2008

Amended: January 1, 2022

Rescinded:

Pre/Post Treatment Protocol

Conditions:

Given a client has provided consent to proceed with treatment.

Advise the Client

Task:

Advise the client on undressing/dressing procedures.

Standard:

Quality / Technical & Interpersonal:

- So that you explain to the client the reasons for the recommended removal of clothing.
- So that you advise the client to remove the clothing and items which they are comfortable removing.
- So that you provide the client with an opportunity to ask questions.
- So that you provide the client an opportunity to dress/undress privately.
- So that you get permission from the client to re-enter the area after providing an adequate amount of time for them dress/undress.
- If the client requires assistance to dress/undress themselves:
 - So that you remove only those pieces of clothing the client provides consent to remove.
 - So that you inform the client of where you might touch them and why, obtaining informed consent.
 - So that you touch only those areas of the client's body needed to remove the client's clothing.
 - So that you record the client's consent and the assistance provided.
 - So that all efforts are made to maintain respectful privacy of the client by use of covering, while assisting them to dress/undress.

Task:

Advise the client on treatment positioning and covering.

Standard:

Quality / Technical:

- So that you obtain client agreement to the treatment position(s).
- So that the instructions include how the client should position their body for treatment.
- So that the client is advised as to use of the sheets to cover themselves once they are in position for treatment, if they are undressed. (Please see the Boundaries Standard regarding draping).
- If the client requires assistance on or off the massage table:
 - So that you modify the assistance approach so as to minimize the client's physical discomfort.



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- So that all efforts are made to maintain respectful privacy of the client by use of covering, while assisting them in getting on or off the table.

Quality / Interpersonal:

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

Safety:

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

Timing:

- Before the client undresses.

Conditions:

Given that the massage therapy treatment session has been completed.

Task:

Advise the client 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 client if they need assistance.
- So that you tell the client about the possibility of dizziness and light-headedness as a result of getting off the table too quickly.

Timing:

- Before instructing the client to dress.

Select massage medium to be used, if needed

Conditions:

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

Task:

Select massage medium to be used, if needed.

Standard:

Quality / Technical and Safety:

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



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Standard 8

Category: CLIENT COMMUNICATION

Ratified: September 13, 2008

Amended: January 1, 2022

Rescinded:

Recommend Home Care

Conditions:

Given that the massage treatment has been completed and the client is dressed, and that home care is indicated.

Task:

Recommend home care, which may include exercises, stretches, hydrotherapy, modifications to activities of daily living, and/or self-massage techniques.

Standard:

Quality / Technical:

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

Safety:

- So that the home care does not put the client at risk.

Timing:

- Before the client departs.



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Standard 9

Category: CLIENT COMMUNICATION

Ratified: September 13, 2008

Amended: January 1, 2022

Rescinded:

Discharge of a Client

Conditions:

Given that the goals of the treatment plan have been met or cannot be met, or the needs of the client cannot be supported by the massage therapist's level of skill, abilities or Scope of Practice.

Given that the therapeutic relationship has been compromised for reasons including:

- The client threatening or endangering the massage therapist.
- The client sexualizing or attempting to sexualize the treatment or environment.
- A sexual attraction between the client and massage therapist.
- The massage therapist's inability to maintain professional boundaries and provide objective treatment in the client's best interest.

Task:

Discharge the client.

Standard:

Quality / Interpersonal

- So that the massage therapist explains to the client 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 client 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 original client file is stored in accordance with Client Records Standard 23, and that copies are provided according to the client's wishes.

Timing

- So that sufficient notice is given to the client.
- So that the details related to the client's discharge are recorded in the client's health record.



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Standard 10

Category: BOUNDARIES

Ratified: September 13, 2008
Amended: January 1, 2022
Rescinded:

Draping

Undrape the Client for Treatment

Conditions:

Given the client is positioned for the treatment.

Task:

Undrape the client for treatment.

Standard:

Quality / Technical:

- So that the draping is secured.
- So that only those areas currently being treated are undraped.
- So that the client's genitalia or gluteal cleft are not exposed.
- So that breasts are not exposed except when being treated in accordance with the Technique Standards.
- Notwithstanding all of the above, it is acceptable for a client to be so exposed within the circumstances of labour or child delivery, if
 - The accommodation is required to effectively deliver massage therapy services requested by the client or her designate,
 - The client 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 massage therapist to ensure privacy and respect for the client.
- Infants may be treated undraped with consent of a parent/guardian or substitute decision maker.

Quality / Interpersonal:

So that the massage therapist:

- Obtains consent to uncover any area of the body before undraping.
- Inquires as to the client's comfort and makes any necessary adjustments.
- Offers alternative draping options or options for treating over clothing or sheets.
- Never reaches under or past the border of the draping.

Instruct and/or Assist the Client to Change Position

Conditions:

Given that the massage therapist requests that the client change positions during treatment.

Task:

Instruct and/or assist the client to change position.



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Standard:

Quality / Technical:

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

Quality / Interpersonal:

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

Safety:

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



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Standard 11

Category: BOUNDARIES

Ratified: January 1, 2022
Amended:
Rescinded:

Treating Family or Friends

Conditions:

Family or friends of a massage therapist are seeking massage therapy services from a practitioner with whom they have an existing personal relationship.

Task:

To ensure that professional boundaries are maintained when the client is the massage therapist's friend or family member, and to manage the risks associated with the resulting dual relationship. These risks include but are not limited to:

- Making assumptions regarding health history, treatment tolerance/client comfort, or payment.
- Missing or withholding of relevant information.
- Preferential treatment.
- Absent or incomplete documentation.
- Real or perceived insurance fraud where third party coverage is sought.

Standard:

Quality / Technical:

So that the massage therapist:

- Avoids treating anyone with whom they have a sexual/romantic relationship, including their spouse, or any other immediate family member.
- Only in exceptional circumstances treats family members or someone with whom they have a close personal relationship. Exceptional circumstances may exist where:
 - There is no other similar or viable healthcare provider available;
 - There is a demonstrated financial hardship on the part of the client;
 - The client's level of distrust and/or discomfort is such that it would be impossible for them to seek treatment from a practitioner whom they do not know; or
 - There exists a real barrier to the client accessing other health care services (for example, a severe communication disability).

Quality / Interpersonal

So that the massage therapist:

- Clearly communicates to the client when the massage therapist is acting in a professional capacity.
- Maintains all of the principles of the therapeutic relationship during treatment and personal interactions. The therapist is extra vigilant in practicing:
 - Confidentiality and client privacy.
 - Thorough interviews and assessments.
 - Equal treatment/objectivity.
 - Thorough and complete documentation.



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Standard 12	
Category: BOUNDARIES	Ratified: January 1, 2022 Amended: Rescinded:

Giving or Receiving Gifts

Conditions:

Gifts are offered by either the client or the massage therapist.

Task:

To ensure that professional boundaries are maintained when considering giving or receiving gifts within the therapeutic relationship.

Standard:

Quality / Technical:

So that:

- All gifts of a significant value (either monetary or sentimental) given/received should be documented in the client's record. The massage therapist must use their professional judgement to determine if the gift is of significant value to the client.

Quality / Interpersonal

- The massage therapist should consider if it could reasonably be perceived that the offering of a gift is intended to influence or increase the power the client holds within the therapist-client relationship. If it is interpreted as such, the therapist should decline the gift and re-establish the expectations of the therapeutic relationship.
- The therapist must not allow gift giving/receiving to influence their professional decision-making nor allow it to impact the frequency, duration, cost, or modality used for/with the client.

Safety:

- So that the massage therapist responds appropriately in order to maintain professional boundaries.



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Standard 13

Category: BOUNDARIES

Ratified: January 1, 2022

Amended:

Rescinded:

Preventing Sexual Abuse

Conditions:

Where an escalation of boundary crossing, and violations of the therapeutic relationship are present.

Task:

To ensure that sexual abuse of clients is prevented and reporting of sexual abuse by other health professionals occurs.

Standard:

Quality / Technical:

- So that sexual abuse by massage therapists is prohibited. “Sexual abuse” includes:
 - Behaviour or remarks of a sexual nature
 - Touching of a sexual nature
 - Sexual intercourse or any form of physical sexual relations

Quality / Interpersonal

So that the massage therapist:

- Takes steps to prevent the occurrence of unintentional or incidental physical contact with the client’s body by potentially sexualized areas of the massage therapist’s body.
- Recognizes and takes steps to minimize the occurrence of unintentional or incidental physical contact with potentially sexualized areas of a client’s body.
- Responds appropriately if unintentional or incidental physical contact with potentially sexualized areas of the client’s body occurs, stops treatment, obtains client consent before continuing with treatment, and documents the incident in the client’s health record.

Safety:

- So that the massage therapist communicates clearly and respectfully with the client regarding any potential, perceived, or actual occurrences of interactions of a sexual nature.
- So that the massage therapist is committed to protecting the physical and emotional health of the client.

Timing:

- So that the massage therapist addresses any situation related to sexual abuse immediately upon recognizing it.



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Standard 14

Category: BOUNDARIES

Ratified: January 1, 2022

Amended:

Rescinded:

Treatment of Sensitive Areas

Conditions:

Given that the treatment of one or more sensitive areas is clinically indicated. Sensitive areas include but are not limited to the chest wall musculature, breast tissue, the upper inner thighs, anterior pelvic/groin area, and gluteal region.

Task:

To obtain informed consent for the inclusion of treatment of sensitive areas of the body in the proposed treatment plan and to provide such treatment within the client's comfort and the massage therapist's Scope of Practice.

Standard:

Quality / Technical:

So that the massage therapist:

- Obtains informed consent as per Client Communication Standard 3.
- Uses appropriate draping techniques as per Boundaries Standard 10.
- Records the details regarding client consent, positioning and draping, and treatment techniques applied to the relevant sensitive areas.

Quality / Interpersonal:

So that the massage therapist:

- Is aware and respectful of clients' personal understanding and opinions regarding the treatment of sensitive areas.
- Provides the client with an alternative proposed treatment plan which does not include the treatment of sensitive areas.

Safety:

- So that the massage therapist applies their professional knowledge and judgement to determine whether treatment to any sensitive areas is clinically indicated.
- So that the massage therapist clearly communicates with the client and is responsive to any verbal and/or non-verbal cues from the client.
- So that the massage therapist provides the client with a referral to another practitioner if they cannot competently perform the indicated treatment to sensitive areas.

Timing:

- The massage therapist obtains informed consent from the client to proceed with the treatment of sensitive areas prior to the client getting on to the massage table.
- The massage therapist obtains the client's consent for any proposed changes to the treatment plan prior to proceeding.



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Standard 15

Category: BOUNDARIES

Ratified: January 1, 2022

Amended:

Rescinded:

Conflict of Interest

Conditions:

Given that a conflict of interest may unduly influence the massage therapist's professional judgment and/or interfere with their ability to provide fair and equal services in the client's best interest.

Task:

To identify, avoid and/or manage any situations that may result in real, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest.

Standards:

Quality / Technical:

- Ensure standard procedures are followed for providing and billing for massage therapy services.
- Avoid entering into agreements in which the massage therapist offers or receives personal benefit as a result of referral or sales incentives.

Quality / Interpersonal:

- Comply with all Boundaries Standards to avoid circumstances that may result in a conflict of interest.
- Disclose and document any situation that may constitute a conflict of interest and how the situation was managed.

Timing:

- Disclose and document any real, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest as soon as they are recognized.



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Standard 16

Category: HEALTH & SAFETY

Ratified: September 13, 2008

Amended: January 1, 2022

Rescinded:

Hand Hygiene

Conditions:

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

Task:

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

Standards:

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.
- Use soap and water rather than hand sanitizer if skin surfaces are visibly soiled.
- Avoid contact with any surfaces in between performing hand hygiene and touching the client.

Timing:

- Immediately before and immediately after each client treatment.



Massage Therapist Association of Alberta

Standards of Practice

Standard 17

Category: HEALTH & SAFETY

Ratified: September 13, 2008

Amended: January 1, 2022

Rescinded:

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 client to determine their risk of exposure to the infectious diseases and whether they are experiencing any known symptoms of the infectious disease.

Standard:

Quality / Technical:

So that the massage therapist:

- Is aware of the symptoms of the infectious disease.
- Uses a screening tool to identify clients at risk of carrying or at risk from exposure, if available.
- Uses protective barriers if the status of the client is unknown, or as recommended by health authorities.
- Cleans and disinfects the clinic area with approved antiseptic cleansers.
- Follows any directive issued by the Province or local public health unit.

Quality / Interpersonal:

- So that the client is informed of the reason for screening and precautions.
- So that the massage therapist provides the client with an opportunity to ask questions.

Safety:

- So that clients 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 client is not discriminated against if they are from an identified at-risk population.

Timing:

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



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Standard 18			
Category:	HEALTH & SAFETY	Ratified:	September 13, 2008
		Amended:	January 1, 2022
		Rescinded:	

Use of Personal Protective Equipment During a Treatment

Conditions:

- Given a client or a massage therapist with a recognizable contagious condition that might be spread by contact or inhalation during the massage therapy treatment.
- Given intra-oral treatment is indicated and consented to.
- Given a client or massage 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 client is given an opportunity to ask questions.

Quality / Technical:

- So that the use of Personal Protective Equipment aligns with Alberta Health Services' guidelines.
- So that the affected area on the client 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 client 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.



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Standard 19

Category: PROFESSIONALISM

Ratified: September 13, 2008

Amended: January 1, 2022

Rescinded:

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

Conditions:

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

Task:

Inform the client of the fees and obtain their agreement to a fee schedule.

Standard:

Quality / Technical:

- Ensuring that the massage therapy service fee schedule is posted in a location where clients may see it or that a copy is provided to the client.
- Ensuring that the rates for a massage therapy appointment are explained to the client including what part of the treatment time will be used for taking a health history and assessment/reassessment.
- Ensuring that the client is aware of and understands the policy with regard to cancellation of appointments.
- Providing the client 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 client and documented in the clinical notes with the reasons and agreement indicated.

Timing:

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



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Standard 20

Category: PROFESSIONALISM

Ratified: January 1, 2022

Amended:

Rescinded:

Interpersonal Behaviours and Communication

Conditions:

Given that the massage therapist is engaging with clients, colleagues or the public in a professional capacity.

Task:

Maintain professional conduct, behaving and communicating respectfully and appropriately.

Standard:

Quality / Technical:

- Establish and maintain the boundaries of professional relationships.

Quality / Interpersonal:

- Use only professionally appropriate body language and gestures.
- Refrain from engaging in physical touch with clients outside of assessment/re-assessment or treatment.
- Communicate clearly using plain language and provide an opportunity for others to ask questions.
- Practice active listening skills.

Timing:

- Throughout the duration of all professional relationships.



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Standard 21	
Category: PROFESSIONALISM	Ratified: January 1, 2022 Amended: Rescinded:

Client-Centred Care

Conditions:

Given that a client is seeking massage therapy services and a therapeutic relationship is established between the client and massage therapist.

Task:

To practice a client-centred approach when providing massage therapy services.

Standard:

Quality / Technical:

- Recognize and respect the client’s right to make decisions about their own health care.
- Provide objective professional opinions and recommendations in the best interest of the client.
- Assist the client to identify and work toward their goals, developing a treatment plan together.
- Provide the client with a referral if their needs and goals cannot be adequately supported within the MTAA Scope of Practice.

Quality / Interpersonal:

- Obtain informed consent through clear and thorough communication.
- Inform the client that their goals, values and priorities are what direct the treatment plan.
- Respect the client’s values and decisions regardless of any personal or professional beliefs, unless the safety of the client or massage therapist becomes a risk.



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Standards of Practice

Standard 22

Category: PROFESSIONALISM

Ratified: January 1, 2022

Amended:

Rescinded:

Dual Membership

Conditions:

Given that an MTAA member is also a member/registrant of another professional association/college or practices any modality outside of the MTAA Scope of Practice and is therefore practicing in dual roles.

Task:

To clearly and effectively separate the role of practicing as a massage therapist from other professional practices or modalities being offered.

Standard:

Quality / Technical:

So that the massage therapist:

- Performs treatments only with their Scope of Practice while practicing as a massage therapist.
- Maintains separate billing and provides separate receipts for massage therapy services provided.
- Maintains separate health records for the practice of massage therapy in keeping with the Client Records Standards.

Quality / Interpersonal:

So that the massage therapist:

- Ensures that the client understands the massage therapist's dual role, what services are being offered, and what service they are receiving.
- Recognizes and manages the increased potential for conflicts of interest to arise while maintaining dual membership.

Timing:

- Prior to the client's appointment and ongoing if relevant when altering the treatment plan and/or obtaining informed consent.



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Standards of Practice

Standard 23

Category: CLIENT RECORDS

Ratified: September 13, 2008
Amended: January 1, 2022
Rescinded:

Client Health Record

Establish and Update Clinical Records for Each Client

Conditions:

Given a client is seeking massage therapy services.

Task:

Establish and update clinical records for the client.

Standard:

Quality / Technical:

- Records should include:
 - the completed client health history information
 - record of client'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 client received from other health care professionals.
- So that all records, whether paper or electronic, are confidential and are stored in accordance with any relevant legislation.
- So that the original records are kept for a minimum of 10 years from the client's last visit.
- So that if the client was under 18 years old at the time of their last visit, the original records are kept for 10 years after the day they turned (or would have turned) 18.
- So that the disposal of client records is done in a secure manner that maintains client confidentiality.

Record All Relevant Information

Conditions:

Given that a massage therapy session is complete or that any new information is gathered.

Task:

Record the relevant interactions with the client, including the assessment/re-assessment and treatment provided to the client.

Standard:

Quality / Technical:

- So that massage therapy records include:
 - date, time and duration of treatment
 - fee for treatment



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- results from assessment techniques used by the massage therapist
- summary of techniques used
- areas treated
- client reactions/feedback to treatment
- informed consent from the client/substitute decision maker
- recommended home care
- updated health history and treatment information as obtained

Timing:

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



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Standard 24

Category: CLIENT RECORDS

Ratified: September 13, 2008

Amended: January 1, 2022

Rescinded:

Obtain, Update and Record the Client's Health History

Conditions:

In a treatment area, given a client is seeking massage therapy.

Task:

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

Standard:

Quality / Technical:

- Health history information must be requested from the client to identify indications and/or contraindications to treatment. Information to be requested includes but is not limited to:
 - date on which health history was taken or updated
 - general health status
 - client 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



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- 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, gynecological conditions
- other diagnosed diseases or medical conditions, for example: digestive conditions, hemophilia, osteoporosis, mental illness etc.
- presence of internal pins, wires, artificial joints or special equipment
- history of headaches or migraines

Quality / Interpersonal:

So that the massage therapist:

- Informs the client of the need to inform you of any change in their health status.
- Informs the client of the reason why an accurate health history is needed before treatment begins.
- Provides the client with an opportunity to ask questions to better understand health history questions being asked.
- Informs the client that all client information is confidential and written authorization will be obtained prior to release of information.
- Informs the client that all client information is confidential and will only be shared with the client's expressed consent, or except as required or allowed by law.
- Identifies any infectious diseases and takes appropriate precautions.

Timing:

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

Safety:

- So that the massage therapist inquires as to any allergies and/or sensitivity to hydrotherapy additives and massage mediums that the client may have.
- So that any contraindications for massage therapy or massage therapy technique(s) are recognized and appropriate accommodations are made.



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Massage Therapy Technique Standards

Category: Technique

Ratified: September 13, 2008

Amended: January 1, 2022

Rescinded:

Introduction to the Standards for Specific Massage Therapy Techniques

There are Standards that apply in general to the performance of massage therapy techniques. These universal Standards are to be met in the performance of all techniques in massage therapy treatment.

Conditions:

Given that the client'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 client's consent and is consistent with the principles of massage.

Standard:

Quality / Interpersonal:

So that the massage therapist:

- Does not use a technique, or continue its use, if the client indicates a preference not to use it.
- Makes the client aware that some techniques may cause adverse reactions, depending on how they are applied, and the condition being treated.
- Treats within the client's pain tolerance and gives the client the opportunity to provide feedback using a previously discussed pain scale.

Quality / Technical:

- So that the four basic principles of massage are applied:
 - superficial, deep, superficial
 - general, specific, general
 - proximal, distal, proximal
 - peripheral, central, peripheral



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Standard 25

Category: Technique

Ratified: September 13, 2008
Amended: January 1, 2022
Rescinded:

Perform a Stroking Technique

Conditions:

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

Task:

Perform a stroking technique.

Standard:

Quality / Technical:

- So that stroking is performed through client'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.



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Standard 26

Category: Technique

Ratified: September 13, 2008
Amended: January 1, 2022
Rescinded:

Perform a Rocking or Shaking Technique

Conditions:

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

Task:

Perform a rocking or shaking technique.

Standard:

Quality / Technical:

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

Safety:

So that the massage therapist:

- Treats within the client's agreed upon pain tolerance.
- Takes special precaution, based on your assessment, with any client who is prone to joint subluxation/dislocation, or joint disease, inflammation or effusion or compromised integrity of the adjoining soft tissue.
- Does not apply or modifies the rocking or shaking technique if a contraindication to this technique exists.



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Standards of Practice

Standard 27

Category: Technique

Ratified: September 13, 2008

Amended: January 1, 2022

Rescinded:

Perform an Effleurage Technique

Conditions:

Given that the client'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.



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Standards of Practice

Standard 28

Category: Technique

Ratified: September 13, 2008
Amended: January 1, 2022
Rescinded:

Perform a Petrissage Technique

Conditions:

Given that the client'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.



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Standards of Practice

Standard 29

Category: Technique

Ratified: September 13, 2008
Amended: January 1, 2022
Rescinded:

Perform a Friction Technique

Conditions:

Given that the client'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 the massage therapist's fingers do not glide over the client'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 the massage therapist:

- Informs the client that applying frictions may cause adverse reactions.
- Inquires as to the client's comfort with regard to the level of pressure and pain.
- Stops or modifies treatment immediately when the client 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.



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Standard 30

Category: **Technique**

Ratified: **September 13, 2008**

Amended: **January 1, 2022**

Rescinded:

Perform a Vibration Technique

Conditions:

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

Task:

Perform a vibration technique.

Standard:

Quality / Technical:

- So that during static vibrations, the massage therapist's whole hand or part thereof is in continuous contact with the client's body without sliding over the client's skin.
- So that during running vibrations, the massage therapist's whole hand or part thereof is in continuous contact with the client's body with a slight glide over the client's skin.

Safety:

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



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Standards of Practice

Standard 31

Category: Technique

Ratified: September 13, 2008

Amended: January 1, 2022

Rescinded:

Perform a Tapotement Technique

Conditions:

Given that the client's treatment plan indicates the need for a tapotement technique.

Task:

Perform a tapotement technique.

Standard:

Quality / Technical:

- So that the technique is percussive and rhythmic.
- So that when performing light tapotement, the massage therapist's hands are light and springy and do not create force below the skin surface.
- So that when performing heavy tapotement, the massage therapist's hands are firm and apply force below the skin surface.

Safety:

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



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Standard 32

Category: **Technique**

Ratified: **September 13, 2008**

Amended: **January 1, 2022**

Rescinded:

Apply Fascial Techniques

Conditions:

Given that the client's treatment plan indicates the use of 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 the massage therapist:

- Informs the client that deep fascial techniques may cause adverse reactions.
- Inquires as to the client's comfort with regard to the level of pressure and pain.
- Stops or modifies treatment immediately when the client indicates an unexpected increase in pain or a positive change in the tissue.

Safety:

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



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Standards of Practice

Standard 33

Category: Technique

Ratified: September 13, 2008

Amended: January 1, 2022

Rescinded:

Myofascial Trigger Points

Identify Myofascial Trigger Points

Conditions:

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

Task:

Identify myofascial trigger points.

Standard:

Quality / Technical:

- So that trigger points are identified correctly, as indicated by at least two of the following:
 - local tenderness within a taut band of muscle
 - local twitch response, and/or a client's report of referred pain
 - tenderness, or autonomic phenomenon pattern.

Quality / Interpersonal:

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

Treat Myofascial Trigger Points

Conditions:

Given that a trigger point has been identified.

Task:

Treat myofascial trigger points.

Standard:

Quality / Technical:

- So that the treatment technique is applied until the client reports that the level of referred pain either decreases or is eliminated, or they request that the technique be discontinued.
- So that the massage therapist discontinues 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 client is informed that the treatment of myofascial trigger points may cause adverse reactions.
- So that the massage therapist treats within the client's agreed upon pain tolerance.

Safety:



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



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Standard 34

Category: **Technique**

Ratified: **September 13, 2008**
Amended: **January 1, 2022**
Rescinded:

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

Conditions:

Given that the client'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 client's pain tolerance.

Safety:

So that the massage therapist:

- Assesses the joint for pain prior to treatment by using a gentle, controlled traction.
- Treats the client within their agreed upon pain tolerance.
- Performs a gentle traction where possible before doing any gliding movements.
- Does not apply or modifies low-grade joint mobilization if a contraindication to this technique exists.



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Standard 35

Category: Technique

Ratified: September 13, 2008
Amended: January 1, 2022
Rescinded:

Apply High-Grade Joint Mobilization

(Sustained Grade II and or Oscillations III and IV Joint Mobilization)

Conditions:

Given that the client'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 are 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 client'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 the massage therapist:

- Assesses the joint for pain prior to treatment by using a gentle, controlled traction.
- Treats within the client's agreed upon pain tolerance.
- Takes special precaution, based on the assessment, with any client who is prone to joint subluxation/dislocation, or joint disease, inflammation or effusion or compromised integrity of the adjoining soft tissue.
- Does not apply or modifies high-grade joint mobilization if a contraindication to this technique exists.



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Standard 36

Category: Technique

Ratified: September 13, 2008

Amended: January 1, 2022

Rescinded:

Perform a Stretch Technique

Conditions:

Given that the client'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 client's pain tolerance.
- So that the stretch is held without bouncing until there is a release in the tissue being stretched.

Safety:

- So that a stretch technique is not used or is modified if a contraindication to this technique exists.
- So that the massage therapist does not stretch an unstable structure or tissue.



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Standard 37

Category: Technique

Ratified: September 13, 2008
Amended: January 1, 2022
Rescinded:

Perform an Intra-Oral Treatment

Conditions:

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

Task:

Perform intra-oral treatment.

Standard:

Quality / Technical:

- So that the massage therapist never treats past the larynx and avoids engaging the gag reflex.

Quality/ Interpersonal:

- So that the massage therapist and client establish a non-verbal signal from the client with regard to pain and comfort level.

Safety:

- So that the massage therapist uses new, intact protective barriers for the entire hand while treating in the mouth.
- So that treatment is discontinued if the client indicates.
- So that intra-oral treatment is not used or is modified if a contraindication to this treatment exists.



Massage Therapist Association of Alberta

Standards of Practice

Standard 38

Category: Technique

Ratified: September 13, 2008

Amended: January 1, 2022

Rescinded:

Perform Breast Massage

Conditions:

Given that breast massage is requested or clinically indicated prior to treatment, the massage therapist is adequately trained in performing breast massage, and that the client has 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 the massage therapist does not touch the nipple and/or areola.
- So that the breast tissue is uncovered only when it is being treated directly, (notwithstanding clause in Boundaries Standard 10).
- 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 Client Communication Standard 3.



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Standard 39

Category: Technique

Ratified: September 13, 2008
Amended: January 1, 2022
Rescinded:

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 client 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 client (notwithstanding clause in Boundaries Standard 10).

Safety

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



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Standard 40

Category: Technique

Ratified: September 13, 2008
Amended: January 1, 2022
Rescinded:

Apply Hydrotherapy

Conditions:

Given that the client's treatment plan indicates a need to use hydrotherapy.

Task:

Apply hydrotherapy.

Standard:

Quality / Technical & Interpersonal:

- So that the massage therapist describes to the client how the hydrotherapy application would be performed, including its intended effect and possible adverse reactions.
- So that the massage therapist provides the client with an opportunity to ask questions.
- So that the massage therapist regularly observes the client's physical reactions and inquires as to the client's comfort.
- So that the hydrotherapy treatment is pre-tested on a small area (patch test) if there is any concern about the client's ability to tolerate the temperature or type of application.
- So that the size, intensity and duration of treatment is determined according to the client's general health status and indications in the case.
- So that the massage therapist provides the client 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 the requirements outlined by Alberta Health Services' Infection Prevention & Control procedures.

Safety:

- So that the applications used are not contraindicated due to the client's condition.
- So that applications are modified if necessary, due to the client's condition.
- So that the massage therapist regularly observes the client's response to treatment and remains available for treatment alteration.
- So that if the medical history of the client indicates a high risk of any adverse 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.



Massage Therapist Association of Alberta

Standards of Practice

Standards for Additional Massage Therapy Techniques

Category: Additional Techniques

Ratified: September 13, 2008

Amended: January 1, 2022

Rescinded:

There are Standards that apply in general to the performance of additional massage therapy techniques. These universal 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 client'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 client's consent, and all aspects of the modality in use are within the scope of practice.

Standard:

Quality/ Interpersonal:

So that the massage therapist:

- Explains the treatment plan and obtains consent in accordance with Client Communication Standard 3.
- Does not use a technique, or continue its use, if the client indicates a preference not to use it.
- Ensures that the client is aware that some techniques may cause adverse reactions, depending on how they are applied, and the condition being treated.
- Treats within the client's pain tolerance and gives the client the opportunity to provide feedback using a previously discussed pain scale.

Quality / Technical:

So that the massage therapist:

- Ensures that they have the necessary knowledge, skills and judgment to safely and effectively apply the additional massage therapy technique.
- Does not practice the additional massage therapy technique if they do not have the educational qualifications required.