



Glossary

Applies to Physical Therapists

The College of Health and Care Professionals of BC was created on June 28, 2024 through the amalgamation of seven health regulatory colleges:

- College of Dietitians of British Columbia
- College of Occupational Therapists of British Columbia
- College of Optometrists of British Columbia
- College of Opticians of British Columbia
- College of Physical Therapists of British Columbia
- College of Psychologists of British Columbia
- College of Speech and Hearing Health Professionals of British Columbia

All current requirements for standards of clinical and ethical practice issued by the seven colleges remain in place upon amalgamation.

This document was created by the College of Physical Therapists of British Columbia and will be updated to reflect the amalgamation.

Glossary



Abandonment of records is the act of leaving behind records without providing for their ongoing security and protection for the duration of the mandatory retention period. This occurs in instances where the physical therapist fails to actively provide for the secure retention, ongoing access and appropriate destruction of records when leaving a practice or retiring, or fails to have contingency plans in place to address records management when faced with unexpected illness.

Accredited university program means an entry to practice physical therapy education program accredited by Physiotherapy Education Accreditation Canada, or an institution's physiotherapy entry to practice education program recognized by the Canadian Alliance of Physiotherapy Regulators credentialing program.

Active listening is a process of attending to what the speaker is saying and repeating back to the speaker what has been heard, to confirm that the listener has correctly understood the speaker.

Advertising is the action of calling something to the attention of the public especially by paid announcements.¹

Boundaries refers to the accepted social, physical or psychological space between people. Boundaries create an appropriate therapeutic or professional distance between the physical therapist and another individual and clarify their respective roles and expectations.²

Bundled physical therapy services means a program of treatment or set of physical therapy services intended to be delivered as a comprehensive plan of care over a course of several physical therapy interactions.

Clients are recipients of physical therapy services, and may be individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities, or populations. An individual client may also be referred to as a patient. In some circumstances, clients/patients may be represented by their substitute decision-makers.³

Close personal relationship is one where the physical therapist's ability to be objective and impartial, and to fulfill their professional obligations may be impaired due to the nature of the personal relationship. Close personal relationships typically exist between an individual and their romantic or sexual partner, children, parents, and close friends, but may also exist between individuals and other relatives, business partners, past romantic partners and others.

Collaborate means to work jointly with others or together, especially in an intellectual endeavor.⁴

Communication is the imparting and exchanging of information and includes speaking, listening, written and electronic information exchange. Effective, professional, communication involves active listening, and the sharing of information using plain language and assistive methods or devices (e.g., interpreters, technology, diagrams, printed education materials) when needed to facilitate the listener's understanding.⁵

Comprehensive refers to complete; including all or nearly all elements or aspects of something.⁶

Concurrent treatment or care refers to the circumstance where more than one health professional (provider) is administering or applying remedies, including medical, surgical or other therapies, to a client for the same or related disease or injury.⁷

Confidentiality is the assurance that certain information that may include a subject's identity, health, behavior, or lifestyle information, or a sponsor's proprietary information would not be disclosed without permission from the subject (or sponsor).^{8,9}

Conflict of interest exists when a reasonable person could conclude that the physical therapist's duty to act in the client's best interests while exercising their professional expertise or judgment may be affected or influenced by competing interests or relationships. Competing interests may be financial, non-financial, or social in nature.

A conflict of interest may be actual, potential or perceived and can exist even if the physical therapist is confident that their professional judgment is not being influenced by the conflicting interest or relationship.¹⁰

Contemporaneous means occurring or originating during the same time. In the physical therapy context, contemporaneous is determined by the practice context, other expected or predictable uses of the record. In the physical therapy context, documentation that does not occur during the same time-period poses risk to the client and is generally seen to be less accurate and more likely to be questioned.

Credible means any evidence that reasonably would be viewed as reliable, accurate, and having basis in fact.¹²

Critically appraised means information that has gone through the process of carefully and systematically examining research to judge its trustworthiness, and its value and relevance in a particular context.¹³

Emerging therapies refers to treatments developed within mainstream physical therapy with support from clinical research but currently lacking in rigorous, peer-reviewed evidence to support their use.¹⁴

Evidence-informed practice is derived from evidence-based practice and involves clinical problem solving and decision making informed by integrating best available evidence, client context and the personal knowledge and experience of the physical therapist.¹⁵

Financial gain in the context of physical therapy practice and conflict of interest, financial gain refers to instances where physical therapists receive financial benefits beyond their customary reimbursement in return for specific actions or activities. Examples include reimbursement in return for providing referrals to others, receiving a portion of profits from product or non-physical therapy service sales, financial bonuses in return for achieving specific billing targets.

Infection prevention and control refers to measures practiced by health-care personnel intended to prevent spread, transmission and acquisition of infectious agents or pathogens between clients, from health-care workers to clients, and from clients to health-care workers in the health-care setting.¹⁶

Informed consent refers to receiving client or their legally authorized representative's permission to proceed with an agreed course of physical therapy service. Consent may be revoked at any time. Consent can be written or oral and may be expressed or implied. Having a written consent form does not mean there is informed consent. Informed consent involves ongoing communication between the parties involved.¹⁷

Marketing is the process or technique of promoting, selling, and distributing a product or service.¹⁸

Mitigate is to make less harsh or severe. Physical therapists mitigate real, perceived or potential conflicts of interest in a way that protects the client's interests by avoiding, accepting and disclosing, transferring or reducing conflicts of interest. Physical therapists are expected to proactively mitigate conflicts of interest to the greatest extent possible.

Other benefit includes but is not limited to gifts of materials or equipment (beyond gifts of a token or cultural nature that are of insignificant monetary value), preferential access to facilities, or provision of promotional activities that would typically be paid for by the physical therapist that have the potential to harm or affect client care, professional judgment and/or trust in the profession.¹⁹

Patient or client safety incident refers to any event or circumstance which could have resulted or did result in unnecessary harm to a client. Client safety incidents consist of near miss events, no-harm incidents, and harmful incidents.²⁰

Personal information means information about an identifiable individual and includes employee personal information but does not include contact information.²¹

Personal protective equipment (PPE) refers to items in place for infection prevention and control, such as masks, gloves, gowns and goggles.²²

Physical therapist support worker (PTSW) is an unregulated health provider working under the supervision and direction of a physical therapist. PTSWs have a range of educational backgrounds and experience. They may be referred to as physical therapist assistant, rehabilitation assistant, therapy assistant, rehabilitation aide, or kinesiologist when working as a supervisee.²³

Physical therapy services are services provided by or under the direction, assignment and supervision of a physical therapist. This includes client assessment and treatment, and related communication with and reporting to various parties for the purposes of delivering client care.³

Plain language refers to communication an audience can understand the first time they read or hear it. Language that is plain to one set of readers may not be plain to others. Written material is in plain language if an audience can:

- find what they need;
- understand what they find;
- use what they find to meet their needs.²⁴

Point of Care Risk Assessment (PoCRA) is a routine practice that should be conducted by a physical therapist before every client interaction to assess the likelihood of exposing themselves and/or others to infectious agents. The PoCRA informs the physical therapist's use of PPE and other infection control measures.²⁵

Primary or home jurisdiction refers to the province or territory where the physical therapist is registered and from which the physical therapist delivers physical therapy services.

Privacy refers to a person's desire to control the access of others to themselves. Privacy protects access to the person, whereas confidentiality protects access to the data.^{8,9}

Proficiency means performance consistent with the established standards in the profession.²⁶

Promotional activities include any effort to communicate with potential customers. Promotional activities serve to inform customers about available products, services, and prices and to persuade customers to buy the products and services. Includes personal selling, direct marketing, advertising, sales promotion, publicity and public relations.

Promptly means with little or no delay.²⁷

Protected title refers to the titles identified under provincial or territorial health profession legislation as being restricted to those who are registered and authorized to practice physical therapy within the jurisdiction. These may include the titles physiotherapist, physical therapist, or the acronym PT.

Quality is the degree to which a product or service satisfies a specified set of attributes or requirements.²⁸

Restricted activities, also referred to as controlled acts or authorized activities, are activities that may only be performed by a regulated health professional in accordance with

regulated health professional in accordance with jurisdictional legislation and regulatory rules. Not applicable to all physical therapy regulators in Canada.

Risk refers to something that may cause injury or harm or the state of not being protected from injury or harm. Clients encounter risk of harm each time they seek healthcare services. Some risks are directly related to assessment procedures and interventions, while others relate to environmental factors or are sector specific.²⁹

Safe means free from harm or risk; secure from threat or danger.³⁰

Sexual abuse includes threatened, attempted or actual conduct of a physical therapist towards a client that is of a sexual nature and includes sexual intercourse, masturbation of or by the client or in the presence of the client, and touching of a sexual nature of client's genitals, anus, breasts or buttocks by a physical therapist.³¹

Sexual misconduct includes any incident or repeated incidents of objectionable or unwelcome conduct, behaviour or remarks of a sexual nature by a physical therapist towards a client that the physical therapist knows or ought reasonably to know will or would cause offence or humiliation to the client or adversely affect the client's health and well-being.³¹

Sexual nature includes any physical contact with private or sensitive areas, or comments that are not indicated for the purpose of providing clinically necessary physical therapy services. This does not include conduct, behaviour, or remarks that are appropriate to the physical therapist service provided.³²

Standardized measures refer to measurement tools that are designed for a specific purpose in a given population. Information is provided regarding the administration, scoring, interpretation, and psychometric properties for each measure.³⁴

Supervisee means an individual who is working under supervision. In physical therapy practice this may include physical therapist support workers or student physical therapists.

Supervision means the action or process of watching and directing what someone does or how something is done.³⁵

Timely refers to happening at the correct or most useful time: not happening too late.³⁶

Therapeutic relationship refers to the relationship that exists between a physical therapist and a client during the course of physical therapy treatment. The relationship is based on trust, respect, and the expectation that the physical therapist will establish and maintain the relationship according to applicable legislation and regulatory requirements and will not harm or exploit the client in any way.³⁷

Transparent (transparently) refers to the quality of being easy to perceive, obvious, clear and unambiguous.

Virtual care is the delivery of physical therapy services using any technology that enables communication between individuals in different locations, including teleconferencing, video conferencing, email, or text communications.³⁸

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