

# CONCURRENT TREATMENT

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## Sharing a Client with Another Physical Therapist or Other Healthcare Providers

Sometimes a physical therapist provides services to a client who is concurrently receiving care from another physical therapist or from another healthcare provider for the same or related injury or condition. It's possible in some situations that:

- The care plans provided by one or more healthcare professionals inadvertently counteract each other.
- The client receives conflicting advice.
- The physical therapist will not be able to document the effect of their own services on the client's health.

### A few things to keep in mind:

- Prior to offering concurrent treatment to a client, you should be sure to understand what treatment is already being provided to the client, and determine whether that care might influence the efficacy of the physical therapy treatment you yourself will deliver.
- You should ensure informed consent is given by the client prior to communicating with other treatment providers.
- Once you understand the treatment already being offered to the client, you should use clinical judgement to determine whether your own concurrent treatment is
  - clinically indicated,
  - complementary and compatible with the treatment approach being used by the other treating healthcare professional(s), and
  - not an unethical or inefficient use of healthcare resources.

### Choosing to provide concurrent treatment

- If you decide to offer services to the client concurrently, the role(s) of each treating healthcare professional should be established collaboratively and clearly communicated to the client prior to offering services to avoid confusion when treatment is underway.
- You should identify, document, communicate, and manage the risks of concurrent treatment.
- When documenting concurrent treatment, clarity is essential. You should seek ongoing information from the client in an effort to

determine and document the effect of your own treatment, and to differentiate that from the effect of another healthcare provider's treatment.

### **Choosing not to provide concurrent treatment**

- Your decision not to offer concurrent services should be made on a **case-by-case** basis. The decision and rationale should be clearly communicated to the client and documented.
- If you decide to discontinue concurrent services for any reason (including when treatment approaches are in conflict or the risks outweigh the benefit to the client), the decision and rationale should be clearly communicated to the client and documented.