



## PT LEARNING EXPERIENCES BY A NON-REGISTRANT

Physical therapists may receive requests from others to observe physical therapy practice. These requests may come from a lay person (for example, a high school student), or they may come from students in health professional programs such as occupational therapy, nursing, medicine or others. One of our duties is to encourage and support interprofessional learning. Physical therapists who wish to provide these experiences should consider the following.

### **A few things to keep in mind:**

- Check whether your own workplace permits you to offer the opportunity to observe. Some workplaces do not.
- Provide the observer with a general orientation to confidentiality policies, safety procedures, and professional behaviour. You should reinforce the necessity for confidentiality throughout the experience, and have the observer sign a confidentiality agreement.
- You must obtain and document the client's informed consent for each and every encounter that the observer has with the client.
- The observer should not be present during your initial contact with the client, or when you seek informed consent for them to observe, so that the client can be comfortable refusing.
- You must identify and introduce the observer accurately (e.g., as a high school student or a nursing student) to prevent confusion or misrepresentation of their status.
- At no time should the observer or a client be exposed to risk of harm.
- It is your responsibility to monitor the observer's behaviour and their interactions with the client.

### **Requests from a regulated health professional or student in a regulated health professional education program**

- Hands-on learning opportunities can be provided **ONLY** under these circumstances. The observer:
  - is a student registrant of a BC regulatory college or will be eligible for registration with a BC regulatory college upon graduation.



- holds their own liability insurance either through their education program or through a BC regulatory college.
- participates only in activities that are within the shared scope of both the physical therapist and their own profession (for example, pelvic examination with a medical student, transfers from wheelchair to bed with a licensed practical nurse student) and not those that are only within the scope of physical therapy, or that are restricted/rostered or certified activities.
- The activities performed must be within your own competence as a physical therapist.
- You should ensure that the observer is competent and should assess level of risk of each activity in order to ensure public safety.

### **Requests from a student in OTA/PTA education program with candidacy status or accreditation by the OTA & PTA EAP**

- Hands-on learning opportunities can be provided **ONLY** under these circumstances. The student:
  - holds their own liability insurance through their education program.
  - participates only in activities that are considered within the competence of a PTA.
- The activities performed must be within your own competence as a physical therapist.
- You should ensure that the observer is competent and should assess level of risk of each activity in order to ensure public safety.

### **Requests from a lay person (high school student, kinesiologist / kinesiology student, student in an OTA/PTA education program without candidacy or accreditation status from the OTA & PTA EAP, etc.)**

- Confirm the liability insurance requirements of your workplace prior to the beginning the observation period.
- Experiences are limited to observation (**NO** hands-on learning opportunities) and at no point can the observer operate equipment or provide care to a client.
- The observer should not have access to a client's clinical records.



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