



POSITION STATEMENT

VIRTUAL MASSAGE THERAPY APPOINTMENTS

Position

During the mandatory cessation of in-clinic activities due to COVID-19, patients are at risk of experiencing an aggravation of their symptoms due to lack of treatment.

As a profession that is moving towards an evidence informed approach to care, MTAA members are trained to provide their patients with therapeutic exercises, movement recommendations and hydrotherapy recommendations to reduce pain and/or discomfort.

To restrict an MTAA therapist's ability to assist in the well-being of their patients, especially during a time when patients are at a higher risk of aggravated symptoms is not congruent with the mission of the Massage Therapist Association of Alberta. MTAA members are healthcare professionals with the necessary knowledge and skills to help their patients even in this time of physical distancing.

MTAA members are temporarily allowed to provide virtual massage therapy services to their patients until such time as the Chief Medical Officer of Health and/or any other Alberta legislative body, rescinds all orders and recommendations to practice physical distancing. When all such orders are rescinded, the MTAA Board of Directors will determine the continuing appropriateness of virtual massage therapy appointments and their permissibility in the future.

A member may bill a virtual massage therapy session, providing the following requirements are met:

- 1) the patient currently has a therapeutic relationship with the clinician (a physical assessment has been previously conducted by the therapist)
- 2) the patient virtually signs a consent for a virtual massage therapy appointment
- 3) the patient provides informed consent
- 4) the virtual appointment must be conducted as a video appointment through an encrypted software that meets all HIPPA guidelines (currently Physitrack and Jane app offer this)
- 5) a complete treatment plan must be documented which includes the therapeutic goals of the virtual massage therapy appointment.

The Massage Therapist Association of Alberta leads the practice of its members in Alberta. Contact us for more information on this or other position statements.

Massage Therapist Association of Alberta

#2, 7429 – 49 Ave.

Red Deer, AB T4P 1N2

T: 403-340-1913 F: 403-346-2269

info@mtaalberta.com • www.mtaalberta.com

- 6) any advice / recommendations given by the massage therapist must be congruent to the treatment plan and fit under the MTAA scope of practice ie. general movement, hydrotherapy and therapeutic exercises.
- 7) anything outside of the MTAA scope of practice **cannot** be discussed during a virtual massage therapy appointment i.e. nutrition, pharmaceuticals, COVID-19 advice, immunizations, distance reiki, personal training etc.
- 8) all virtual massage therapy appointments must consist of an assessment or re-assessment and therapeutic advice / exercises.
- 9) full and complete charting needs to be completed maintaining the same standards as any in person massage therapy appointment.
- 10) all other applicable standards of practice must be maintained during and after virtual massage therapy appointment.
- 11) The receipt for treatment must state “virtual massage therapy appointment/session”.

At this time, most extended health insurance companies are not covering virtual massage therapy. Your patient should be made aware of this prior to their session.