



POSITION STATEMENT

DUAL MEMBERSHIP

Position

The practice of more than one profession by the same practitioner raises issues regarding the regulation and accountability of a practitioner who is functioning in dual roles. In these circumstances there is potential for patients to be misled about the qualifications or role of the practitioner. Massage Therapists must give careful consideration to whether they are using their additional skills and knowledge within the Scope of Practice of Massage Therapy.

Massage Therapists who practice in more than one profession must be held accountable for their decisions about when they may include a treatment or modality in their Massage Therapy practice and when it is appropriate to separate their practice and cease to hold themselves out as Massage Therapists. This will also reduce confusion or misunderstanding by members of the public as to which of the two professions the therapist is practicing.

Some modalities are shared between more than one profession and the question therefore arises as to when it is appropriate to cease to hold oneself out as a Massage Therapist and to instead declare oneself as a practitioner of another modality or as a practitioner of a regulated health service. The MTAA has an obligation to ensure that its members conform to an appropriate standard. Dual practice by members of the MTAA creates confusion around issues of jurisdiction and impedes the resolution of complaints.

Through the appropriate separation of practice, members will ensure that the public and insurance providers are fully aware of the profession they are practicing at any given time and also which professional body the practitioner is accountable to for his or her practice. In addition, if a complaint is lodged, the MTAA is more readily able to determine to what extent it should scrutinize the alleged conduct.

Dual members must keep in mind that the patient's perception as a recipient of treatment is of critical importance and that patients cannot be expected to understand neither the Regulations nor the Scopes of Practice for the different health professions.

The Massage Therapist must ensure that patients understand when and in what circumstances they are receiving treatment from the practitioner in his/her capacity as a Massage Therapist and when and in what circumstances they are receiving treatment from the practitioner which is outside the Scope of Practice of a Massage Therapist and within the Scope of Practice of the other health profession in which they are regulated.

Guidelines

Dual Members

A dual member is one who is a member of the MTAA and who is also registered with another health profession in Alberta under the *Alberta Health Professions Act* (AHPA). Dual members would also be those members of the MTAA who practice modalities that are considered outside or complimentary to the MTAA Scope of Practice and are certified in that particular modality, or who are members of a professional body that represents that modality.

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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.

Accountability

Members are responsible for ensuring that they have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform treatments provided within their Massage Therapy practice. They are also responsible for ensuring that they are functioning within the Scope of Practice of Massage Therapy when using the title Massage Therapist. The application of any skill/modality/technique for treatment purposes, which does not fall within the Scope of Practice of Massage Therapy, is not Massage Therapy and a Massage Therapist should not perform the skill/modality/technique in his/her capacity as a Massage Therapist.

Restricted Activities

Massage Therapists are not authorized to perform any restricted activities under the AHPA. If a therapist is registrant of a health regulatory college in Alberta, which has authority to oversee the performance of a restricted activity, the therapist should separate his/her practices and be acting in the capacity of a Massage Therapist when performing the restricted activity.

Receipts

Massage Therapists will comply at all times with the MTAA Receipts Guidelines for all receipts issued for Massage Therapy treatment. Members cannot issue and sign a receipt for services performed outside the Scope of Practice of Massage Therapy and identify it as a receipt for Massage Therapy. Members will issue separate receipts for treatment provided in the role of the other health profession by which they are regulated according to that College's/Council's receipt requirements.

Conflict of Interest

The potential for conflict of interest to arise is heightened in dual practice. The MTAA expects its members to behave ethically when recommending additional services. Members must ensure that an additional service does not appear to have been recommended solely to increase the member's business revenues.

Dual Members' Requirements

1. Inform patients if any part of a proposed treatment is outside the Scope of Practice of Massage Therapy;
2. Inform patients when a proposed treatment would not be administered in the capacity of a Massage Therapist;
3. Inform patients that treatment outside the Scope of Practice will not be included on any receipt completed by the therapist as Massage Therapy treatment;
4. Before consent to treatment is received, inform patients of the therapist's dual role as a Massage Therapist and as a provider of another area of health care practice;
5. Provide sufficient and appropriate information to patients to enable them to make an informed choice about which treatment(s) they wish to receive;
6. Maintain records for the Massage Therapy practice separate from the records of the practice of the other health profession; and
7. Take all reasonable steps to ensure the patient understands the member's dual role.

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