

CODE OF ETHICS



Preamble

This Code of Ethics expresses the ethical principles and values of the PEI Massage Therapy Association and serves as a guide to the professional conduct of all its members.

The Code also informs the public of the standards of ethical conduct for which members are to be responsible and accountable.

The Code, along with the Standards of Practice and other Massage Therapy Association policies provides the common framework for therapeutic massage in Prince Edward Island.

Massage Therapists promote the dignity of the profession and are committed to practicing with honesty, integrity, and accountability, respecting all laws and refusing to participate in or conceal any unethical, false, fraudulent, or deceptive activity.

Massage Therapists are committed to the health, well-being, and safety of clients. The Code identifies application of Respect, Responsible Care, Integrity in Relationships, and Responsibility to the Public. Massage Therapists must take appropriate actions regarding any instances of incompetent, unethical, illegal, or impaired practice.

Principle I - Respect for Persons

Meaning: To value the dignity and worth of all persons regardless of age, race, culture, creed, sexual identity, gender, ability and/or health status.

Application:

1-1 Client autonomy is demonstrated by:

- a) Ensuring that clients are as fully involved as possible in the planning and implementation of their own health care
- b) Providing complete and accurate information in a sensitive and timely fashion to enable clients, or when necessary a client's substitute decision maker, to make informed choices
- c) Listening to and respecting a client's values, opinions, needs, cultural beliefs, experiences and preferences, particularly as they apply to their attitudes to suggested treatments
- d) Encouraging and being responsive to a client's choice to accept, augment, modify, refuse or terminate treatment
- e) Being informed about legal rights of a client
- f) Playing a role in assisting patients to navigate the healthcare system, including referring them to other appropriate healthcare providers, services and community resources
- g) Safeguarding the client's right to privacy and confidentiality by holding all personal and health information in confidence unless otherwise required by law

Principle II – Responsible Care

Meaning: Providing sensitive, compassionate and empathetic massage therapy treatments

Application:

2-1 Responsible care of a client is demonstrated by:

- a) Listening to and respecting the client's values, opinions, needs, cultural beliefs, experiences and preferences
- b) Promoting the client's best interest and well-being, through the highest possible standard of professional practice
- c) Seeking assistance (asking for help) when practitioner's comfort level is challenged by client's comments or behaviours
- d) Recognizing and referring the client to other health care providers and/or services when it is in the client's best interest to do so
- e) Being alert to and reporting, as required by law, any suspected sexual abuse of a client by a member of any regulated health profession
- f) Approaching and co-operating with substitute decision makers in assessing the client's wishes and best interests in the event of incapacity
- g) Protecting the client's physical and emotional privacy
- h) Collecting only that information which is relevant to the provision of health care.

Principle III - Integrity in Relationships

Meaning: To practice with integrity, honesty and diligence in our professional relationships with ourselves, our clients, our professional colleagues and society.

Application:

3-1 Commitments to Clients are demonstrated by:

- a) Ensuring that we always act in our client's best interest as defined by the client's wishes and consistent with the standards of practice of the profession
- b) Informing the client about health care services available to support their current needs
- c) Referring to other health care providers as necessary and appropriate
- d) Recognizing that the nature of the treatment relationship creates a position of power to be carefully exercised in the client's best interests.
- e) Maintaining professional boundaries between professional therapeutic relationships and personal relationships and not engaging in relationships of a romantic or sexual nature with clients
- f) Obtaining assistance (asking for help) when a client communicates or expresses choices that seem likely to cause harm to themselves or others
- g) Providing client-centered health care which includes the following:
 - i) Explaining to the client and advocating for his/her right to receive information about, and take control of his/her health care
 - ii) Providing information about the proposed treatment, alternative courses of action, the material effects, risks and side effects in

each case and the consequences of not having the treatment

- iii) Assisting the client to comprehend information
- iv) Responding to questions about our client's health care/treatment
- v) Acknowledging errors and taking necessary actions to minimize harm to clients

3-2 Commitments to Self are demonstrated by:

- a) Being pro-actively committed to our own health and personal and professional development
- b) Being competent, conscientious and empathetic practitioners
- c) Being aware of our personal values and being able to identify when value conflicts interfere with client care
- d) Keeping our professional commitment by integrating massage values and principles in our daily practice

3-3 Commitments to our Professional Colleagues are demonstrated by:

- a) Respecting our colleagues and working co-operatively with them
- b) Intervening in situations where the safety and well-being of a client is in jeopardy
- c) Reporting to appropriate authorities any regulated health care practitioner who abuses a client physically, verbally, sexually or financially
- d) Referring to other health care providers when necessary and appropriate
- e) Recognize that self-regulation of the profession is a privilege and that each registrant has an ongoing responsibility to support the public interest mandate of the regulatory college

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- f) Contributing to continuous quality improvement initiatives
- g) Upholding standards and guidelines of the profession
- h) Representing ourselves honestly, and performing only those services for which we are qualified

Principle IV - Responsibility to the Public

Meaning: To be accountable to society and conduct ourselves in a manner that fosters and promotes high ethical standards.

Application:

4-1 Ethical practice is demonstrated by:

- a) Adhering to the laws governing professional practice (*although not yet regulated under the Regulated Health Professions Act, Massage Therapists are encouraged to become familiar with the Act.*)
- b) Practicing within the Association's standards of practice and within the limits of personal competency
- c) Reporting, as required by law, any fitness to practice concerns concerning any other massage therapist
- d) Pursuing continued career-long, professional learning
- e) Advocating for and supporting a client's ethical rights
- f) Participating in the promotion of the profession of massage therapy through advocacy, research and maintenance of the highest possible standards of practice
- g) Promoting positive changes in health care by actively participating in health policy development, review, and revision

- h) Making every reasonable effort to ascertain that our clinical environment will permit provision of care consistent with the values in the Code of Ethics
- i) Committing to continuous improvement and implementation of standards of massage practice
- j) Collaborating with members of the other health professions to meet the health needs of the public
- k) Continuing to develop ways to clarify massage therapist's accountability to the public