

Policy and Position Statements

Acknowledgement

The College of Massage Therapists of Newfoundland and Labrador gratefully acknowledges the kind permission of the College of Massage Therapists of Ontario (CMTO) to adapt a number of the CMTO policies and position statements.

Introduction

Legislative Hierarchy

There is a hierarchy of authority governing the practice and conduct of health professionals in Canada. Health professionals, like all citizens, are expected to comply with federal and provincial laws.

Federal legislation has the most authority, followed by provincial legislation. Examples of federal legislation that may be relevant to massage therapists are the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Criminal Code. An example of provincial legislation relevant to the practice of massage therapy is the *Massage Therapy Act, 2005*.

The *Massage Therapy Act, 2005* gives the College the authority to make Regulations. There is a formal process for the drafting and approval of Regulations and once approved by the Board of Directors of the College and Government, members are required to comply with these rules. Regulations, like legislation, are written in a legal format.

The College has also developed policy statements, and position statements to assist members in understanding their professional responsibilities, and to articulate the College's position on topics that may require further details or which are not covered in the legislation or Regulations.

Policy Statements

Policy statements articulate the College's opinion on specific issues relating to the practice of massage therapy. These statements provide members with a broader explanation of practice issues than can be found in the legalized format of the corresponding Regulation. **Members who violate College policy may be deemed to have violated a Regulation and therefore to have committed professional misconduct.**

Position Statements

A position statement provides the collective opinion of the College's Board of Directors relating to practice issues that may not be covered by a Regulation or policy statement. Position statements are often developed in response to members' questions and provide a framework within which practice decisions can be made. Members whose practice is not consistent with the position outlined by the College, may be required to justify their conduct or actions. Guidelines provide a more detailed description of the way in which a policy or position is translated into practice. They are intended to provide guidance to members.