

Position Statement 4

Treatment of sensitive areas

Position

Clients are entitled to informed choice concerning all proposed treatments and treatment plans. All clients regardless of age or gender who receive massage therapy are entitled to a complete explanation of the proposed treatment including: prediction of both frequency and duration of treatments, proposed draping and positioning, risks and benefits, alternatives to treatment or draping, and right of refusal throughout the care plan.

The chest wall musculature, breast tissue, inner thigh and gluteal region may be considered sensitive areas of the body and could be potential targets for both misunderstandings of intent and actual sexual abuse. It is the College's position that for proposed treatment of sensitive areas, consent should be obtained and recorded in the client's treatment notes.

Guidelines

Therapists obtain and record verbal consent for all procedures, including massage to sensitive areas.

The client has the right to a re-assessment of the treatment plan, and when the treatment plan outcomes have been met, treatment of the sensitive area is to be discontinued. When a condition does not respond to the proposed treatment plan, it is the responsibility of the therapist to discontinue the plan and refer the client to the appropriate care provider.

Massage therapists must conduct themselves responsibly and understand that treatment of chest wall musculature, breast tissue, inner thigh and gluteal structures that exceeds reasonable professional practice is disconcerting to the public and the College, and may be considered grounds for charges of professional misconduct.