

Cannabis Use Policy

On October 17, 2018, recreational cannabis became legal for adult use in Canada under the *Cannabis Act, 2018*. Amendments to the *Cannabis Act* in June 2018, which came into force on October 17, 2019, permit the regulated production and sale of three new categories of cannabis: edible cannabis, cannabis extracts and cannabis topicals.

This policy is intended to address the impact on Massage Therapy Practice and address questions that Registered Massage Therapists (RMTs) and clients may have about cannabis and Massage Therapy.

1. Recreational or Medical Use of Cannabis by Patients

RMTs have asked what to do if a patient seeks massage therapy treatment while exhibiting signs of having recently used cannabis, or if a patient discloses the recent use of cannabis, whether recreational or medical.

- RMTs must obtain informed consent for therapeutic services. In order to provide informed consent, the patient must be capable of providing consent.
- If the patient is unable to consent to treatment due to impairment by drugs (legal or otherwise), alcohol or another substance, or it is unclear whether the patient is able to consent to treatment, then the RMT is advised not to proceed with treatment.
- RMTs are advised that it is not within the scope of practice for massage therapy to provide information or advice about how cannabis may affect a person's health. RMTs are advised to direct patients with these types of questions to a physician.

2. Recreational or Prescribed Use of Cannabis by RMTs

CMTNL's policies state that RMTs must not practice massage therapy while impaired. In the context of cannabis use, this applies regardless of whether an RMT is using cannabis for a prescribed or a recreational purpose.

- The use of any drug or substance, whether prescribed or recreational, has the potential to compromise the ability to provide safe and effective care to patients. If the substance affects communication, professional judgment or decision-making skills, then RMTs must refrain from practicing massage therapy while taking the drug or substance or while feeling its effects.

3. Use of Cannabis Oil and/or CBD in Treatment

RMT's have inquired if they may apply cannabis oil or oil/lotion containing cannabidiol (CBD) as part of the provision of massage therapy.

The *Cannabis Act* and associated regulations do not expressly authorize RMTs (or any other health care practitioners) to apply cannabis oil or oil/lotion containing CBD as part of the provision of health care.

- CMTNL advises RMTs not to apply or administer cannabis oil or a CBD product to a patient as it is not within the scope of practice for massage therapy

What is Cannabis?

Under section 2 of the *Cannabis Act*:

- “cannabis” means a cannabis plant [and any part of a cannabis plant, including the phytocannabinoids produced by, or found in, such a plant, regardless of whether that part has been processed or not (other than a non-viable seed of a cannabis plant, a mature stalk without any leaf, flower, seed or branch of such a plant, fibre derived from such a stalk, or the root or any part of the root of such a plant), as well as any substance or mixture of substances that contains or has on it any part of such a plant or any substance that is identical to any phytocannabinoid produced by, or found in, such a plant, regardless of how the substance was obtained.]

