

# Standards of Practice

# Client-Centered Care

## Standard

The physiotherapist integrates a **client-centered approach** in all aspects of **physiotherapy service delivery**.

## Expected outcome

**Clients** can expect that they will be treated respectfully and their input will be valued, acknowledged, and integrated into all aspects of physiotherapy service delivery.

## Performance expectations

The physiotherapist:

- Treats clients in a manner that recognizes and appreciates their autonomy, uniqueness, goals, and self-worth at all times.
- Values the best interests of clients.
- Involves clients in decision-making regarding their care, respecting their independence and right to refuse or withdraw from treatment at any time.
- Communicates with clients to facilitate their understanding of the care plan and how it addresses their goals, outlines the risks and benefits of services, and obtains **informed consent**.
- Monitors clients' responses throughout service delivery, adjusting and modifying interventions/approaches as required, and obtaining ongoing informed consent.
- Treats all clients with compassion, respect, and dignity throughout the course of their care.
- Terminates the **therapeutic relationship** with clients making appropriate arrangements for transfer of care or discontinuation of services.

**Client-centered approach** refers to “an approach which recognizes the physiotherapist’s expertise and values, respect for and partnership with the people receiving physiotherapy care, including the client’s ability to make key choices in services delivered.”

**Clients** are recipients of physiotherapy services, and may be individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities, or populations. An individual client may also be referred to as a patient. In some circumstances, clients/patients may be represented by their substitute decision-makers.

**Informed consent** refers to “receiving client or their legally authorized representative’s permission to proceed with an agreed course of physiotherapy service. Consent may be revoked at any time...Consent can be written or oral, and may be expressed or implied. Having a written consent form does not mean there is informed consent. Informed consent involves ongoing communication between the parties involved.”

**Physiotherapy service delivery** refers to the period from the initial client assessment to discharge from services provided by the physiotherapist.

**Therapeutic relationship** refers to the relationship that exists between a physical therapist and a client during the course of physical therapy treatment. The relationship is based on trust, respect, and the expectation that the physical therapist will establish and maintain the relationship according to applicable legislation and regulatory requirements and will not harm or exploit the client in any way.

## Related Standards

- Client Assessment, Diagnosis, Interventions
- Communication
- Consent
- Documentation and Record Keeping
- Professional Boundaries