

Standards of Practice

Infection Control



Standard

The physiotherapist complies with **infection prevention and control** measures to support the health and safety of **clients**, health-care providers, her/himself, and others.

Expected outcome

Clients can expect that the measures in place for infection prevention and control during the provision of **physiotherapy services** are in compliance with applicable legislation, regulatory requirements, standards, and guidelines.

Performance expectations

The physiotherapist:

- Acquires the education, training, and **proficiency** to apply infection prevention and control techniques in physiotherapy practice (e.g., when needling, suctioning).
- Adheres to best practices of infection prevention and control in physiotherapy practice according to applicable legislation, regulatory requirements, standards, and guidelines.
- Maintains the cleanliness of all spaces, equipment, and devices according to appropriate legislation, infection prevention and control standards/policies, and manufacturer's recommendations.
- Documents details of reprocessing and sterilization of reusable medical equipment detailing parameters used to meet requirements outlined in Alberta Health's Standards for Cleaning, Disinfection and Sterilization of Reusable Medical Devices for Health-care Facilities and Settings, and retains this documentation for five (5) years.
- Disposes of devices and materials according to best practices and established protocols.
- Uses **routine practices** (e.g., hand washing, point-of-care risk assessment, use of **personal protective equipment**) to minimize or prevent the spread of acquired infections in the health-care setting.

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.

Infection prevention and control refers to "measures practiced by health-care personnel intended to prevent spread, transmission and acquisition of infectious agents or pathogens between patients, from health-care workers to patients, and from patients to health-care workers in the health-care setting."

Personal protective equipment refers to the use of items such as gloves, gowns and goggles to protect the physiotherapist during client treatment.

Physiotherapy services are "services provided by or under the direction of a physiotherapist. This includes client assessment and intervention, and related communication with and reporting to various parties for the purposes of delivering patient care."

Proficiency means performance consistent with the established standards in the profession.

Routine practices are a comprehensive set of infection prevention and control measures that have been developed for use in the routine care of all patients at all times in all health-care settings. Routine practices aim to minimize or prevent health-care acquired infections in all individuals in the health-care setting, including patients, health-care workers, other staff, visitors and contractors. These include hand hygiene, point-of-care risk assessment and indications for and appropriate application of aseptic technique, handling client equipment, cleaning environment waste and sharps handling, etc.

Related Standards

- Documentation and Record Keeping
- Quality Improvement
- Risk Management
- Safety