

Standards of Practice Supervision



Standard

The physiotherapist is responsible and accountable for the physiotherapy services provided by personnel working under their **supervision** (supervisees), and for providing appropriate supervision, in accordance with the client's needs, supervisee's skills and competencies, identified risks, and the context of practice.

Expected outcomes

Clients can expect that they are informed of the role of supervisees, have consented to services being provided by supervisees, and that the services provided by supervisees are supervised by the physiotherapist.

Performance expectations: supervision of physiotherapist support workers

When supervising **unregulated health providers working as physiotherapist support workers**, the physiotherapist:

- Is aware that a supervisor-supervisee relationship and related supervision responsibilities exist any time an unregulated health provider delivers physiotherapy services that the physiotherapist assigned.
- Assigns only those tasks/activities that the supervisor is competent to perform.
- Assesses the knowledge, skills, and judgment of support workers.
- Assigns only those tasks/activities that fall within the support worker's competence.
- Assesses clients to determine those appropriate to receive physiotherapy services from support workers.
- Communicates to clients the roles, responsibilities, and accountability of support workers participating in the delivery of physiotherapy services.
- Obtains clients' informed consent for the delivery of physiotherapy services by support workers.
- Uses mechanisms (e.g., name tags, introduction) so that support workers are readily identifiable.
- Employs direct or indirect supervision strategies appropriate to the competence of the support worker, the client's care needs, identified risks, and other factors related to the practice environment.
- Establishes ongoing and timely communication with support workers.

- Monitors and evaluates the delivery of physiotherapy services by support workers.
- Monitors documentation of physiotherapy services by support workers to confirm that the documentation is consistent with regulatory standards.
- Reassesses clients, monitors and evaluates the delivery of physiotherapy services by physiotherapist support workers and client outcomes, modifying or reassigning service delivery as determined by clients' needs.
- Must not assign the following activities to support workers:
 - Any restricted activity, or portion thereof, authorized to the physiotherapist.
 - Interpretation of referrals, diagnosis, or prognosis.
 - Interpretation of assessment findings and determination of treatment procedures and treatment goals and the planning, development, or modification of treatment plans beyond pre-set parameters.
 - Initial discussion of treatment rationale, clinical findings, and prognosis with clients.
 - Documentation that should be completed by the physiotherapist.
 - Discharge planning.
 - Any treatment that would require the physiotherapist support worker to employ clinical reasoning, analysis, and decision-making to change the established plan of care without the input of the supervising physiotherapist.
- Reassigns the supervision of support workers when the physiotherapist is not available to supervise.
- Advises clients and employers that delivery of physiotherapy services by support workers must be discontinued when physiotherapist supervision is not available.

Performance expectations: supervision of physiotherapy students

When supervising **physiotherapy students**, the physiotherapist:

- Is aware that a supervisor-supervisee relationship and related supervision responsibilities exist any time they agree to be a preceptor to a student and the physiotherapy student is delivering physiotherapy services.
- Assigns only those tasks/activities that the supervisor is competent to perform.

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- Assesses the knowledge, skills, and judgment of physiotherapy students.
- Assigns only those tasks/activities that fall within the physiotherapy student's competence.
- Identifies clients appropriate to receive physiotherapy services from physiotherapy students.
- Communicates to clients the roles, responsibilities, and accountability of physiotherapy students participating in the delivery of physiotherapy services.
- Ensures that clients have provided informed consent for the delivery of physiotherapy services by physiotherapy students.
- Uses mechanisms (e.g., name tags, introduction) so that physiotherapy students are readily identifiable.
- Employs direct or indirect supervision strategies appropriate to the competence of the physiotherapy student, the client's care needs, identified risks, and other factors related to the practice environment.
- Establishes ongoing communication processes with physiotherapy students.
- Monitors documentation by physiotherapy students to confirm that this documentation is in accordance with regulatory requirements.
- Monitors and evaluates the delivery of physiotherapy services by physiotherapy students and client outcomes, modifying or reassigning service delivery as determined by the client's needs.
- Complies with legislative and regulatory rules regarding performance and supervision of restricted activities by physiotherapy students.
- Reassigns the supervision of physiotherapy students when the physiotherapist is not available to supervise.
- Advises clients and employers that delivery of physiotherapy services by physiotherapy students must be discontinued when physiotherapist supervision is not available.
- Confirms that the respective roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of the physiotherapist intern and their supervisor have been communicated to clients and that clients have provided informed consent for the delivery of physiotherapy services by the physiotherapist intern.
- Uses mechanisms (e.g., name tags, introduction) so that physiotherapist interns are readily identifiable.
- Employs direct or indirect supervision strategies appropriate to the competence of the physiotherapist intern, the client's care needs, identified risks, and other factors related to the practice environment.
- Establishes ongoing communication processes with physiotherapist interns.
- Complies with legislative and regulatory rules regarding performance and supervision of restricted activities by physiotherapist interns.
- Monitors and evaluates the delivery of physiotherapy services by physiotherapist interns.
- Reassigns the supervision of physiotherapist interns when the physiotherapist is not available to supervise.
- Advises clients and employers that delivery of physiotherapy services by physiotherapist interns must be discontinued when physiotherapist supervision is not available.

Performance expectations: supervision of physiotherapist interns

When supervising **physiotherapist interns**, the physiotherapist:

- Is aware that a supervisor-supervisee relationship and related responsibilities exist any time they agree to supervise a physiotherapist intern and the physiotherapist intern delivers physiotherapy services.
- Ensures that the physiotherapist intern performs only those activities that the supervisor is competent to perform and supervise.
- Assesses the knowledge, skills and judgment of physiotherapist interns.
- Ensures that the physiotherapist intern performs only those activities that the physiotherapist intern is competent to perform.

Physiotherapist intern: a regulated member of the College of Physiotherapists of Alberta, registered on the Provisional Register. A practice permit is issued with the condition that the physiotherapist intern practice under supervision.

Physiotherapy student: an individual enrolled in a physiotherapy entry to practice education program is considered a physiotherapy student when they are engaged in activities related to their entry to practice education program.

Physiotherapist support worker: unregulated health provider working under the supervision and direction of a physiotherapist. Physiotherapist support workers have a range of educational backgrounds and experience. May be referred to as physiotherapist assistant, rehabilitation assistant, therapy assistant, rehabilitation aide, or kinesiologist when working as a supervisee.

Supervision means the action or process of watching and directing what someone does or how something is done.

Related Standards

- Assessment, Diagnosis, Treatment
- Conflict of Interest
- Informed Consent