

Standards of Practice Supervision

Standard

The physiotherapist is responsible and accountable for the **physiotherapy services** provided by personnel working under her/his **supervision (supervisees)**.

Expected outcome

Clients can expect that they are informed of the role of supervisees and that the services provided by supervisees are supervised by the physiotherapist.

Performance expectations

The physiotherapist:

- Assigns only those tasks/activities that he/she is competent to perform.
- Assesses the knowledge and skills of supervisees, and assigns only those tasks/activities that fall within the supervisee's **competence**.
- Communicates to clients the roles, responsibilities, and accountability of supervisees participating in the delivery of physiotherapy services.
- Uses mechanisms (e.g., name tags, introduction) so that supervisees are readily identifiable.
- Assesses clients to determine those appropriate to receive services from supervisees, assigns tasks, and supervises accordingly and in compliance with applicable regulatory requirements.
- Obtains clients' **informed consent** for the delivery of services by supervisees.
- Employs supervision strategies (direct and indirect) to maintain client safety and the provision of **quality** care which take into account the competence of the supervisee, the client care needs, and other factors related to the practice environment.
- Establishes ongoing communication processes with supervisees.
- Monitors documentation by supervisees to confirm that this documentation is in accordance with regulatory requirements.
- Monitors and evaluates the delivery of services by supervisees.
- Reassesses clients, monitors outcomes, documents, and reassigns service delivery as determined by clients' needs.

- Complies with and is aware of legislative and regulatory rules regarding assignment of physiotherapy services, including restricted activities, to physiotherapy students and physiotherapist interns.
- Refrains from assigning the following activities to unregulated health providers in supervisee roles:
 - Restricted activities authorized to physiotherapists through relevant provincial legislation
 - 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
 - Initial discussion of treatment rationale, clinical findings and prognosis with clients
 - Documentation that should be completed by the physiotherapist
 - Discharge planning
 - Any task or procedure that requires continuous clinical judgment (i.e., **interventions** that include an evaluative component that immediately influences the client's treatment plan)
- Reassigns the supervision of supervisees when the physiotherapist is not available to supervise.
- Advises clients and employers that delivery of physiotherapy services by supervisees must be discontinued when the physiotherapist is no longer involved in client care.

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.

Competence is the degree to which an individual can use the knowledge, skills, and judgments associated with the profession to perform effectively within the domain of professional encounters defining the scope of professional practice. Competence is developmental, impermanent, and context-specific.

- Competency is the ability to perform a practice task with a specified level of proficiency.

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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.”

Interventions refer to physiotherapy services that “include but are not limited to education and consultation, therapeutic exercise, soft tissue and manual therapy techniques including manipulation, electro-physical agents and mechanical modalities, functional activity training, cardio-respiratory and neuromotor techniques, and prescribing aids and devices.”

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.”

Quality of health-care services refers to the “acceptability, accessibility, appropriateness, effectiveness, efficiency, and safety” of the services provided.

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

Supervisees refers to students, assistants, and other support personnel.

Related Standards

- Client Assessment, Diagnosis, Interventions
- Client-Centered Care
- Consent
- Documentation and Record Keeping
- Safety