The 5 Ws of Risk Management and Safety

COLLEGE OF PHYSIOTHERAPISTS OF ALBERTA

01 Who is Responsible for Risk Management and Safety?

All staff members have a responsibility to identity risks in the practice setting. Ownership or those in management positions have a responsibility to create and update policies around critical event management.

02 What do you need to have in place?

You need to plan for all reasonably foreseeable situations that could occur in the practice setting. It is not just about high-level risks related to restricted activities. You should include environmental risks (power outages, fire, flood) and common risks such as falls.

03 When should we review or update these policies?

If you don't have any, you need to put some in place. If you have them in place, annual review seems to be typical but it may be prudent to review related policies after any near miss or patient safety incident.

04 Where should these be stored?

You should have critical event plans stored online or a hardcopy that lives at the practice site. The main goal is that they are easily accessible by your team.

05 Why should we spend time practicing, rather than just reading them every year?

Practice does make perfect. It is one thing to read about how you should react when a fire alarm gets pulled but it is another to be able to respond accordingly, ensuring the safety of those around you. Going through the responses and practicing them will increase your competency when it comes time to act in a real situation.