



CANADIAN MASSAGE & MANUAL OSTEOPATHIC THERAPISTS ASSOCIATION

Code of Ethics

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CMMOTA MEMBER CODE OF ETHICS GUIDELINES

- Each member of our Association will respect and protect patient dignity and safety.
- Each member will respect and protect the dignity of their therapy through their actions and professional conduct.
- Each member will respect the client's right to privacy and confidentiality.
- Each member will provide competent, safe care to all clients.
- Each member will act with integrity and honesty in all situations.
- Each member will not misrepresent their knowledge, technical abilities, or skills. They will refer clients with conditions which require treatment beyond the member's knowledge and abilities accordingly as part of their commitment to professional conduct.
- Each member will continue to study and advance their knowledge, competence, and effectiveness.
- Each member will not slander or belittle another therapist or any other healthcare professional.

Code of Ethics Definition:

A Code of Ethics is a statement that expresses the primary ethical values, obligations, and goals of the professions. It is a commitment which serves to bear witness to each CMMOTA member's promise to uphold the values and ethical obligations expressed in the Code.

Purpose of Code of Ethics:

A Code of Ethics gives definition to the CMMOTA member's commitment to practice in ethical terms. As health professionals, each CMMOTA member has made a promise to society to accept the responsibility and maintain the trust with which they have been invested.

Intention of Code of Ethics:

It lays out clearly the Massage and Manual Osteopathic Therapy profession's values and explains what they are in terms of what each member ought to do in order to protect and promote the public good, and what each member must avoid doing in order to prevent harm to the public.

To whom does this Code apply?

This Code applies to all members of CMMOTA that act as practitioners, business owners, educators, researchers, administrators or policy makers. As Members, they are all expected to maintain a commitment to Massage Therapy values and/or Manual Osteopathic Therapy philosophies respectively and to follow the principles outlined in this Code.

CMMOTA's Mission:

"To provide professional association membership to massage and/or manual osteopathic therapists by promoting excellence in education and accountability in practice among our nationwide membership to improve the health and wellness of Canadians."

What is Massage Therapy?

Massage therapy, in practice, is the assessment, treatment and prevention of joint and soft tissue physical dysfunction, injury, and pain, using manual and electro therapeutic modalities, soft tissue manipulation and mobilization. Massage therapy is a clinically oriented healthcare profession that can assist in alleviating pain and discomfort associated with repetitive strains, persistent chronic pain conditions, muscular overuse, and many other musculoskeletal dysfunctions arising from biopsychosocial stressors utilizing both therapeutic and relaxation techniques to provide a therapeutic outcome. Entry level techniques are specified in the *Inter-Jurisdictional Practice Competencies and Performance Indicators for Massage Therapists at Entry-to-Practice (September 2016)* document.¹

What is Manual Osteopathic Therapy?

Manual Osteopathic Therapy, in practice, is a hands-on manual therapy treatment method that assesses and treats the way the body functions as whole, rather than viewing its parts or symptoms separately. The primary focus of Manual Osteopathy is to assess the root cause of dysfunction from a wholistic standpoint and then restore function and eliminate pain by addressing the root cause of the pain, imbalance, injury or illness. The Manual Osteopathic Therapist uses practice competencies outlined in the World Health Organization's *Benchmark for Training in Osteopathy*², with the intention of improving and restoring the body back to health. Entry level treatment techniques typically include a combination of osteo articulation, advanced myofascial release, manual lymphatic drainage, craniosacral therapy, visceral manipulation, joint mobilization, and muscle energy technique.

What is the Scope of Practice for Massage Therapy?

For a detailed overview of Scope of Practice, please refer to the *CMMOTA Massage Therapist Scope of Practice* and *Standards of Practice for Massage Therapists and Spa Therapists* Documents.

Simplified, this scope has three parts:

- 1) **What:** Assessment and treatment of soft tissue and joints
- 2) **How:** Manipulation of soft tissues and joints in combination of massage techniques, therapeutic exercise, and thermal applications.
- 3) **Why:** To develop, maintain or augment physical function or relieve pain

¹ A copy of this document can be found at <https://www.fomtrac.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/FOMTRAC-PCs-Pls-September-2016.pdf>

² A copy of this document can be found at https://iris.who.int/bitstream/handle/10665/44356/9789241599665_eng.pdf?sequence=1

What is the Scope of Practice for Spa Therapy?

For a detailed overview of Scope of Practice, please refer to the CMMOTA *Spa Therapist Scope of Practice* and *Standards of Practice for Massage Therapists and Spa Therapists* Documents.

Simplified, this scope has three parts:

- 1) **What:** Assessment and treatment of soft tissue and joints
- 2) **How:** Manipulation of soft tissues and joints in combination of massage techniques, therapeutic exercise, and thermal applications.
- 3) **Why:** To develop, maintain or augment physical function or relieve pain

What is the Scope of Practice for Manual Osteopathic Therapy?

For a detailed overview of Scope of Practice, please refer to the CMMOTA *Scope of Practice for Manual Osteopathic Therapists* and *Standards of Practice for Manual Osteopathic Therapists* Documents.

Simplified, the Scope of Practice encompasses:

- 1) **What:** Assessment and treatment of the client as a whole with Manual Osteopathic Principles.
- 2) **How:** Manual Intervention as outlined in the World Health Organization's *Benchmark for Training in Osteopathy*
- 3) **Why:** To develop, maintain and augment balance and reverse mechanical disruptions to the body

Acknowledgements

Special thanks to the Canadian Council for Massage Therapy Schools for provision of the language used in the CMMOTA Massage and Manual Osteopathic Therapist Pledge.

5 General Code of Ethics Principles to Guide the Practice of Massage Therapy and Manual Osteopathic Practice

Principle I - Respect for Persons

Principle II - Responsible Caring

Principle III - Integrity in Relationships

Principle IV - Responsibility to Society

Principle V - Commitment to Confidentiality

Principle I - Respect for Persons

Meaning:

To value the dignity and worth of all persons regardless of age, race, culture, creed, sexual identity, gender, ability and/or health status

Application:

Client autonomy is demonstrated by:

- a) Ensuring that clients are as fully involved as possible in the planning and implementation of their own health care
- b) Providing complete and accurate information in a sensitive and timely fashion to enable clients, or when necessary, a client's substitute decision maker, to make informed choices
- c) Listening to and respecting a client's values, opinions, needs, and cultural beliefs
- d) Encouraging and being responsive to a client's choice to accept, augment, modify, refuse, or terminate treatment
- e) Being informed about moral and legal rights of a client
- f) Advocating for and supporting a client in exercising his/her moral and legal rights

Principle II - Responsible Caring

Meaning:

Providing sensitive, compassionate, and empathetic treatments.

Application:

Responsible care of a client is demonstrated by:

- a) Listening to and respecting the client's values, opinions, needs, and cultural beliefs
- b) Promoting the client's best interest and well-being, through the highest possible standard of professional practice
- c) Seeking assistance when conflicts arise between the value systems of the practitioner and the client
- d) Recognizing and referring the client to other health care providers when it is in the client's best interest to do so
- e) Being alert to and reporting, as required, any unethical practice by any member of the regulated health professions
- f) Approaching and co-operating with substitute decision makers in assessing the client's wishes and best interests in the event of incapacity
- g) Protecting the client's physical and emotional privacy
- h) Collecting only that information which is relevant to the provision of health care

Principle III - Integrity in Relationships

Meaning:

To practice with integrity, honesty, and diligence in professional relationships with clients, professional colleagues, and society.

Application:

Commitments to clients are demonstrated by:

- a) Ensuring that the member, acting in the capacity of health practitioner always acts in the client's best interest
- b) Informing the client about health care services available to support them
- c) Referring to other health care providers as necessary and appropriately
- d) Obtaining assistance when value conflicts arise which threaten to impede client autonomy
- e) Providing client-centered health care which includes the following:
 - I) Explaining to the client and advocating for his/her right to receive information about, and take control of his/her health care
 - II) Providing information about the proposed treatment, alternative courses of action, the material effects, risks and side effects in each case and the consequences of not having the treatment
 - III) Assisting the client to comprehend information
 - IV) Responding to questions about a client's health care/treatment

Commitments to Self are demonstrated by:

- a) Being pro-actively committed to one's own health, personal development, and professional development
- b) Being competent, conscientious, and empathetic practitioners
- c) Being aware of one's personal values and being able to identify when value conflicts may interfere with client care

Principle IV - Responsibility to Society

Meaning:

To be accountable to society and conduct one's practice in a manner that fosters and promotes high ethical standards

Application:

Ethical practice is demonstrated by:

- a) Pursuing continued career-long, professional learning
- b) Advocating for and supporting a client's ethical and moral rights
- c) Participating in the promotion of the respective professions through advocacy, research, and maintenance of the highest possible standards of practice
- d) Being committed to promoting the welfare and well-being of all persons under their care
- e) Committing to continuous improvement and implementation of practice standards
- f) Collaborating with members of the other health professions to meet the health needs of the public
- g) Continuing to develop ways to clarify professional accountability to society

Principle V – Commitment to Confidentiality

Meaning:

The member shall safeguard the confidentiality of all client information, unless disclosure is requested by the client in writing, or is required by law, or is necessary for the protection of the public

Application:

Protection of privacy demonstrated by:

- a) Respecting client information, both written and verbal
- b) Ensuring whatever is shared within a session is intended to stay there. A client's confidentiality assures that conversations occurring during a session are only shared with others if it does not violate the client's privacy rights and is for a medical or legal purpose
- c) Safeguarding the client's right to privacy and confidentiality by holding all personal and health information in confidence unless otherwise required by law
- d) Proper storage and securing of client files through the use of a locked or inaccessible room or cabinet, or through secure and encrypted digital files

CMMOTA Massage & Manual Osteopathic Therapist Pledge

I commit my knowledge, skills, and intention to serve the best interests of my clients and to facilitate their health and wellbeing.

My practice of client care will be conducted with respect, dignity, and compassion.

I will engage in respectful collegial relationships with members of my own profession and other health care professions.

I will value the trust that society has vested in me as a health care practitioner by being accountable, ethical and responsible.

I make this pledge with integrity and of my own free will.