



# Standards of Practice

# Conflict of Interest

## Standard

The physiotherapist must identify and avoid, or manage any real, potential, or perceived **conflicts of interest**.

## Expected outcome

**Clients** can expect that the physiotherapist delivers services in clients' best interests and that real, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest are disclosed and managed.

## Performance expectations

The physiotherapist:

- Identifies and manages any situations of real, potential or perceived conflicts of interest involving themselves or a related person. This includes but is not limited to:
  - Receiving financial or other benefits from other providers related to accepting referrals, providing services, or selling products.
  - Providing and/or accepting incentives to/from others to generate referrals, provide services, or sell products.
  - Receiving financial incentives based on client numbers, service volumes, profits, etc.
  - Self-referring clients acquired in the public sector for treatment in the private sector for her/his own personal gain.
- Refrains from participating in any activity in which professional judgment could be compromised or is for personal gain.
- Refrains from participating in any real, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest. In situations where conflict of interest cannot be avoided, manage and provide full disclosure of the conflict of interest to clients and others as appropriate and documents in a complete, open, and **timely** manner how the conflict was managed.
- Makes a reasonable effort to refrain from providing services to an individual with whom he/she has a close personal relationship. In situations where this conflict of interest cannot be avoided (e.g., where no other professional with the specific skills is available):

- Fully disclose and document the conflict of interest.
- Indicate how the relationship is to the client's benefit and complies with regulatory requirements.
- Follow formal processes and document all **physiotherapy services** provided.
- Discloses any activity or arrangement that constitutes a conflict of interest for themselves or a related person to the Registrar.

**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.

**Conflicts of interest** refers to situations that arise when the physiotherapist has a relationship or interest that may be seen as improperly influencing their professional judgment or ability to act in the best interest of the client."

**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."

**Timely** refers to "happening at the correct or most useful time: not happening too late."

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## Related Standards

- Advertising
- Client-Centered Care
- Consent
- Legislative Responsibilities

## Resources

- Canadian Physiotherapy Association. (2007). Position Statement Conflict of Interest. Available at: [http://www.physiotherapy.ca/getmedia/133bfb5b-2327-454d-8db6-cff4123f837f/Conflict-of-Interest\\_en.pdf.aspx](http://www.physiotherapy.ca/getmedia/133bfb5b-2327-454d-8db6-cff4123f837f/Conflict-of-Interest_en.pdf.aspx)
- College of Physiotherapists of Ontario. (2008). Advertising; Fees & Billing; and Conflict of Interest. Guide to the Standards for Professional Practice. Available at: [http://www.collegept.org/Assets/website/registrants'guideenglish/standards\\_framework/standards\\_practice\\_guides/GuideToAdvertisingFeesBillingConfilctOfInterest.pdf](http://www.collegept.org/Assets/website/registrants'guideenglish/standards_framework/standards_practice_guides/GuideToAdvertisingFeesBillingConfilctOfInterest.pdf)
- Nova Scotia College of Physiotherapists. (2012). Practice Standard - Referrals and Financial Benefits. Available at: <http://nsphysio.com/resources/Referrals+and+Financial+Benefits+Practice+Standard+final+revision2.pdf>
- Physiotherapy Alberta College + Association. (2016) Managing Challenging Situations A Resource Guide for Physiotherapists. Available at: [http://www.physiotherapyalberta.ca/files/guide\\_managing\\_challenging\\_situations.pdf](http://www.physiotherapyalberta.ca/files/guide_managing_challenging_situations.pdf)