



POSITION STATEMENT

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TOPIC: USE OF TITLE AND CREDENTIALS

INTRODUCTION

Public interest is protected through a consistent application of use of title, title abbreviations and credentials. *The Physiotherapists Act* of Manitoba stipulates that no persons other than a registrant of the College of Physiotherapists of Manitoba may use the titles “physical therapist”, “physiotherapist” or “physiothérapeute” and abbreviations “PT” and “pht”.

The underlying intent of the legislation is to protect the public by ensuring that only properly qualified physiotherapists use the title. The public has a right to know who the physiotherapists treating them are, and what his or her qualifications are. In addition, the College must be able to identify the physiotherapist should a concern arise.

In 1999 and 2000, additional protection for Canadian physiotherapists was obtained Federally, for ten words that describe the physiotherapist’s title, title abbreviations and practice through “official Marks” registered under the Section 9 of the Trademark Act.

The purpose of this document is to provide registrants, their employers and other health care partners and stakeholders with guidelines to ensure the use of title, title abbreviation and credentials serves the public interest, meets professional obligations and legal requirements.

DEFINITIONS

Credentials: refers to those words or abbreviations that indicate an educational qualification, certification, or specific competency.

Title: refers to the words “physiotherapist”, “physical therapist” and “physiothérapeute” as defined and described in *The Physiotherapists Act*.

Title abbreviation: or the abbreviation for the title words, functions as the professional designation.

A Position Statement is a formal position of the College with which members shall comply.

GUIDELINES

1. Title

Use of the title words “physiotherapist”, “physical therapist” and “physiothérapeute” is limited to registrants of the College of Physiotherapists of Manitoba. Registrants of the College have met the educational qualifications or other measures of competence and are therefore registered to practice physiotherapy in the province of Manitoba.

Title options are applicable for use with *human clients*. Physiotherapists who practice in the animal rehabilitation field should not use the title or practice words.

Physiotherapists must not use the title “specialist” or any other similar designation suggesting a recognized special status, special levels of competence or accreditation.

There are two acceptable abbreviations for the title words: PT is the acceptable English abbreviation and pht is the acceptable French abbreviation. Documents or records signed in the capacity or role of a physiotherapist (e.g. charts, reports, bills) must include either the full professional title or an approved abbreviation. The terms “physio” or “therapist” are colloquial terms and are not acceptable abbreviations of the title words.

Physiotherapists who hold a doctorate degree can not use the title of “doctor” or an abbreviation of the title “Dr.” preceding their professional name if they are providing patient care services using the title and scope of practice of a physiotherapist/physical therapist.

Dual Health Care Practices

Some physiotherapists are trained in and practice other regulated or unregulated health disciplines. In these circumstances there is potential for patients, insurers and others to be misled about the capacity in which the professional is acting.

Physiotherapists who practice more than one discipline must keep their roles, titles, credentials, documentation and billing practices separate and distinct.

Multidisciplinary Practice

Multidisciplinary practice is growing in both the private and public sectors of health care. Records of physiotherapy care must be easily identifiable as physiotherapy records, even when they are part of a multidisciplinary patient file.

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2. Credentials

Credentials refer to those words or abbreviations that indicate an educational qualification, certification or specific competency, which are used by a physiotherapist in their formal or informal written or verbal communications related to the provision of patient care services.

The College of Physiotherapists of Manitoba acknowledges and supports the development of advanced or focussed competence and the additional education and qualifications, while not inferring that those physiotherapists without such education or qualifications are not competent to also provide such care.

While advanced and enhanced competency is encouraged, physiotherapist's use of credentials is limited to those credentials that meet the following criteria:

1. Denote educational standards which are commonly understood by the public (e.g. Master's Degree is commonly known to be an advanced educational degree);
2. Denote credentials with educational standards that have standards that are consistent and verifiable;
3. Denote credentials that are related to the physiotherapist's professional practice (i.e. physiotherapy).

Only credentials approved by the College in the form or format consistent with this guideline may be used.

Acceptable credentials include:

- Name of the academic diploma or degree(s) earned to allow the practice as a physiotherapist, as the title appears on the registration certificate
- Acceptable abbreviation of the title of the diploma or degree(s)
- Master's and Doctorate degrees from an accredited Canadian university, or deemed equivalent to those degrees.

Use of Membership in Associations or Special Interest Group as a Credential

In the past, some physiotherapists have included abbreviations of their memberships with a professional association, society or body after their full title or title abbreviation as a component of their credentials. Membership in a body is not a recognizable qualification and does not meet the definition of a "credential". Therefore it is not permissible to use membership as a credential.

The following list and similar other memberships are not considered credentials by this guideline and as such should not be used by physiotherapists in their formal or informal written or verbal communications related to the provision of patient care services.

MCPA Member of the Canadian Physiotherapy Association
MCSP Member of the Chartered Society of Physiotherapists (British Association)
SPD Member of the Sports Physiotherapy Division

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ACCEPTABLE FORMATS FOR TITLE AND CREDENTIALS

| Physiotherapists Name | Title or Title abbreviation | Degree/diploma related to title | Other acceptable degrees/diplomas Credentials |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|--|
| <i>First in sequence</i> | <i>Second in sequence</i> | <i>Third in sequence Or from highest to Lowest</i> | <i>Third in sequence or from highest to lowest</i> |
| Jean Martin J. Martin Jean M. | Physiotherapist physiothérapeute Physical Therapist | BMR PT BPT BSc(PT) MA(Ed) | MBA BSc, Psych Doc candidate |

PHYSIOTHERAPY STUDENT

Students enrolled in an accredited physiotherapy educational program must use the title “Student physiotherapist” or “Physiotherapy student”.

The student will use this title only during activities directly related to and approved by the university program. Students may not use the title in alternative situations such as volunteer role or a job, even if it is in the same organization. Once a student is graduated he/she is no longer a student and must not use the student title.

The outcome of graduation from an accredited Canadian entry-level physiotherapy program is not necessarily the ability to register as a physiotherapist. Graduates from an accredited physiotherapy program must be registered with the College of Physiotherapists of Manitoba *before* using the title Physiotherapist, Physical Therapist.

Legislative Reference:

Regulations, Schedule A , clause 13 “Description of Qualifications”

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