

4.31 Electrophysical Agents

Purpose:

The selection of electrophysical agents, which include but are not limited to electrical, light, thermal, mechanical and hydrotherapy modalities, must be based on a comprehensive client assessment and informed patient consent. Physiotherapists will apply these modalities with attention to indications, contraindications and precautions to ensure patient safety.

Policy:

Physiotherapists will:

- Use equipment for treatment purposes that meets all applicable standards, legislation, regulations and manufacturer's recommendations.
- Confirm, verify and document that all electrophysical agents and radiation-emitting devices are tested prior to their initial use in the practice to ensure compliance with all applicable standards, legislation, regulations and manufacturer's recommendations.
- Confirm, verify and document that all electrophysical agents and radiation-emitting devices are tested, maintained, inspected, and calibrated annually, or as required by applicable standards, legislation, regulations and manufacturer's recommendations.
- Not use a device that does not comply with all safety and operational standards.
- Inform others who may use the equipment of any operational or standards violations, and must take reasonable steps to have the equipment brought into compliance or removed from the practice.
- Verify that there are no contraindications to the proposed application of the specific electrophysical agent, and must be aware of any precautions to the application.

- Inform the client of any potential risks of using these modalities and perform appropriate sensation assessments.
- Deliver only services that are clinically indicated for clients and that the physiotherapist is competently able to provide, and for which the patient has provided his/her informed consent. This includes adherence to all risk management practices and a thorough knowledge and understanding of potential remedial actions during and after treatment.
- Apply all appropriate safety procedures when using electrical, light, thermal, mechanical and hydrotherapy equipment in physiotherapy.
- Monitor the client's responses throughout service delivery, adjusting and modifying interventions/approaches as required.
- Delegate the application of electrophysical agents to student physical therapists or Rehabilitation Assistants only in cases when these practitioners have received adequate education in said application. The physiotherapist must be confident that the individual being assigned tasks has the knowledge and skill necessary to carry out the task appropriately. The physiotherapist remains responsible and accountable for the safety and quality of the entire treatment plan, including assigned component.
- Dispose of, or take reasonable steps to ensure the disposal of, devices and materials according to best practices, established protocols and all applicable standards, legislation, regulations and manufacturer's recommendations.