



CERTIFIED REGISTERED  
Massage Therapist Association

# CRMTA

## Code of Ethics

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In fulfilling their professional responsibilities, CRMTA members must demonstrate professionalism, honesty, courtesy, integrity and respect. CRMTA requires that all Massage Therapists demonstrate, through their practice and continuing competence, an overriding commitment to the well-being and safety of their clients.

Adherence to this Code of Ethics is part of CRMTA members commitment to demonstrate their competence which we define as the “*combined knowledge, skills, attitudes and judgment required to provide professional services.*”

All members of the CRMTA are required to comply with this Code of Ethics and its implementation and administration. Failure to comply may result in investigation, and discipline, including suspension and/or cancellation of the Massage Therapist’s membership in the CRMTA.

Massage Therapists shall abide by the following responsibilities:

### 1. General Duty to Patients

1.1 CRMTA members shall:

- (a) Act in the best interest of their patients;
- (b) Only provide a treatment if the member has a reasonable expectation that it will be of benefit to a patient;
- (c) Only provide massage therapy treatments that fall within the Massage Therapist’s competence and within the scope of practice of massage therapy.

1.2 A member shall not take advantage of a patient’s vulnerabilities for the member’s sexual, emotional, social, political, or financial interest or benefit.

1.3 A member shall not in their professional practice contravene the *Alberta Human Rights Act*, as amended from time to time.

1.4 A member shall not refuse to treat a patient unless:

- (a) The patient’s condition renders the treatment unsafe, unnecessary or not beneficial to the patient;
- (b) The patient asks the member to perform an illegal or unethical act;
- (c) There is a conflict of interest between the member and the patient which cannot be resolved in accordance with section 8 of this Code (“Code of Interest”);
- (d) There is incompatibility between the member and the patient;
- (e) the patient loses confidence in the member; or
- (f) The patient fails to satisfy a statement of account for services rendered within 15 days or after 3 treatments.

### 2. Sexual Conduct Prohibited

2.1 A member shall not:

- (a) Engage in sexual conduct with a patient;

- (b) Engage in sexual conduct with a former patient within one year of termination of massage therapy; or
- (c) Make any inquiry into a patient's sexual history, unless such an inquiry is directly related to the assessment or treatment of the patient's condition.

### **3. Responsibilities to Their Client**

#### **3.1 A member shall:**

- (a) Keep their place of business safe, hygienic and follow appropriate standards for health care facilities at all times;
- (b) Use only the modalities and equipment within their competence;
- (c) Protect their client's dignity at all times, including ensuring that the client is provided with a private change area to dress and undress;
- (d) Ensure a proper assessment/case history of the client's circumstances prior to the first treatment procedure, and at regular intervals appropriate to the client's circumstances;
- (e) Only provide services with non-therapeutic purposes if accompanied by an assessment and case recordings. For example, the Massage Therapist must advise clients that an assessment and case recordings are prerequisites for providing non-therapeutic massage therapy services, including for entirely "relaxation" purposes;
- (f) Provide the client the opportunity for "informed consent," prior to the initiation of any treatment procedure;
- (g) Respect and appropriately document the client's right to accept, refuse, modify or terminate treatment at any time, regardless of prior consent;
- (h) Fully involve the client as appropriate in the planning and implementation of professional services provided to them;
- (i) Ensure accurate documentation of the client's circumstances, treatment provided, and the client's response;
- (j) Exercise the right to refuse to treat any client, or a part of their body, if there is an appropriate and defensible rationale;
- (k) Ensure client confidentiality, in accordance with provincial and federal legislation, and not release any information without the client's consent;
- (l) Work in collaboration with other regulated health professionals, in the client's best interests;
- (m) Not provide treatment with the specific intent to cause physical, mental and/or emotional injury;
- (n) Not provide medical diagnoses;
- (o) Not engage in the restricted activity of "psychosocial intervention" as defined under the *Health Professions Act*. Massage Therapists may engage in general lifestyle counselling, with a view to improving clients' overall physical conditioning and/or ability to conduct everyday activities of daily living;
- (p) Not engage in "prescribing, suggesting or merchandising of "nutraceuticals," herbal remedies, dietary supplements, vitamins, nutritional supplements or other pharmaceuticals;

- (q) Not use inappropriate, sexual or sexually suggestive language with a client, nor accept it from a client.

#### **4. Responsibilities to the Public at Large**

4.1 A member has a professional responsibility to:

- (a) Accurately inform clients, other regulated health professionals and the public of the competencies of Massage Therapists;
- (b) Serve the public interest by providing quality services, in an ethical, competent, effective and efficient manner;
- (c) Refer clients with medical conditions beyond their competencies to the appropriate health care professional;
- (d) Exercise restraint in criticizing another health professional's work in public, recognizing that there are appropriate forums for these types of discussions;
- (e) Promote greater public understanding of health and health system issues;
- (f) Represent their credentials and their profession to the public in a complete and honest manner.

#### **5. Responsibilities to the Profession of Massage Therapy and to Their Colleagues**

5.1 All CRMTA members shall:

- (a) Abide by the CRMTA's bylaws, policies and procedures and other standards, as amended from time to time;
- (b) Establish and maintain effective collegial relations with other regulated practitioners, in the client's and profession's best interests;
- (c) Express their professional opinions only when they are founded on appropriate knowledge and full understanding of the issues;
- (d) Promptly report to the CRMTA a fellow Massage Therapist who is perceived to be engaging in unethical, incompetent or unprofessional behaviour or practice;
- (e) Strive for professional excellence through regular self-assessments and active participation in the CRMTA's Continuing Competence Program;
- (f) Conduct themselves in their professional lives in a manner that will enhance the image of the massage therapy profession;
- (g) Not engage in criminal, sexual and/or other behaviour, and/or advertisements to the public, whether overt or covert, which could possibly place the profession's reputation in disrepute;
- (h) Not misrepresent themselves or the profession to the public;
- (i) Not endorse any product, technique or ability to be more effective than can be objectively demonstrated, including through peer-reviewed research;

#### **6. Reporting of Members**

6.1 If a member has reasonable grounds to believe that another member has:

- (a) Committed an act of professional misconduct;

- (b) Engaged in sexual conduct with a patient, or with a former patient, within one year of the therapist providing massage therapy services to the patient;
- (c) Practiced the profession while the member's ability to do so was impaired by drugs, alcohol, a physical or mental ailment, emotional disturbance or addiction to substance;
- (d) Engaged in any unsafe, unethical or illegal activity related to the practice of massage therapy; or
- (e) Permitted his/her office or clinic to be used for an unlawful purpose that member shall promptly notify the CRMTA along with the following information:
  - (i) the name of the member filing the report;
  - (ii) the name of the member who is the subject of the report;
  - (iii) details of the alleged professional misconduct, prohibited sexual misconduct, incompetence, or incapacity, including the sources of information relied upon;
  - (iv) the identity of the any patients involved, after the member has obtained the patient's consent to disclosure of the patient's identity to the CRMTA.

## **7. Guarantees of a Cure Prohibited**

- 7.1 A member shall not claim that a treatment, or use of certain equipment, will provide a cure, nor shall the member guarantee therapeutic value to a patient.

## **8. Responsibilities to their Employers (If Applicable)**

- 8.1 CRMTA members owe a duty to their employer to:

- (a) Act in good faith in accordance with contractual/employment obligations;
- (b) Clearly inform their employer of their competencies relative to the expected work assignments and responsibilities;
- (c) Observe all relevant health and safety legislation, guidelines and employer policies and procedures;
- (d) Clearly present the consequences of actions to their employers, when there are professional disagreements, and the therapist's judgments are overruled;
- (e) Advise their employer to consult with other experts and specialists whenever the employer's interests are best served;
- (f) Not accept compensation, commissions or allowances, directly or indirectly, from other parties dealing with their employer in connection with work for which they are responsible;
- (g) Not accept nor offer personal gifts or benefits, with the expectation or the appearance of influencing an employer's decision.

## **9. Conflict of Interest**

- 9.1 A conflict of interest exists where the Massage Therapist uses their position, authority or privileged information to:

- (a) Obtain an improper benefit personally, directly or indirectly; or
- (b) Obtain an improper benefit for a friend, relative or associate.

9.2 The Massage Therapist shall:

- (a) Conduct all relationships in a way that assures those affected by the therapist's actions are not compromised by a conflict of interest;
- (b) Disclose to the appropriate authority any direct or indirect personal or financial involvement when providing input to or making a decision;
- (c) Refrain from using membership in the CRMTA and/or their professional credentials to promote or discuss commercial products or services.