

Practice standards for massage therapists

All massage therapists treating injured workers must comply with practice standards of the association.

The standards will encompass the delivery of medically necessary and injury-related massage therapy services and the environment in which these services are delivered. Massage therapists treating injured workers must comply with the standards noted below.

Standards

A. Professional affiliation requirements and credentials

A massage therapy service shall be provided to injured workers by a member who:

- Is currently registered to practice in the province of Saskatchewan,
- Is in good standing with the association, and
- Has been accredited as a WCB service provider by the WCB.

Registration shall be at the therapist level, which must include a minimum of 2,200-hour education requirement plus practical experience. Decisions regarding whether a massage therapist has satisfied this education requirement shall be made in collaboration with the association.

Information and application forms pertaining to accreditation with the WCB are available online at wcbask.com.

Massage therapists must practice:

- Within the scope of services identified by the WCB in Schedule B (Service fees and fee codes for massage therapy service providers),
- In compliance with practice standards of the association, and
- The practice standards contained within this schedule.

Where a service is provided outside of the province of Saskatchewan, the massage therapist must comply with the practice standards within this schedule.

B. Scheduling of patients

Massage therapy services will be provided to injured workers only upon referral by a licensed practitioner who identifies the goals and objectives of treatment. The referral document shall be provided to the WCB at the time the massage therapist is seeking authorization to provide care and invoice the WCB for that care.

The massage therapy clinic shall maintain evidence of some measure of volume per massage therapist which shall not exceed two patients per hour. The injured worker's injury-related needs will determine duration of treatment time. The treatment is not to exceed one treatment per day, unless prior approval from the WCB is received.

C. Model of care

The massage therapy service must be a component of a multi-component treatment plan and not a stand-alone option and, where appropriate, the massage therapist will encourage the injured worker to make active efforts towards recovery, rather than adopting a passive involvement in recovery from the work injury. Treatment shall focus on the area of injury and, as necessary, adjacent structures and not whole-body massage.

D. Managing potential conflict of interest

Where the massage therapist or clinic has a financial relationship with the injured worker's employer, that relationship shall be disclosed to the injured worker at the first contact, ensuring the worker has an opportunity to make an informed decision regarding their choice of a provider.

E. Confidentiality requirements

All health-related and personal information received during the course of treatment of an injured worker will be treated in a confidential manner and no information will be revealed to any person or party other than those persons to whom reports are to be made or to such other persons as may, from time to time, be designated by the WCB. Information pertaining to functional ability may be provided to the employer for the purposes of establishing a return-to-work arrangement.

Where an injured worker requests copies of his massage therapy file, the massage therapist shall provide only those documents which were created in the clinic. Documents from other providers and the insurer may be obtained by the injured worker from the creators or stewards of those records.

F. Authorization to treat and invoice

Section 103(1) of the Act states in part:

Every worker who is entitled to compensation or who is disabled only on the day of the injury is entitled without charge to:

- (a) Any medical aid that may be necessary as a result of the injury,
- (b) Any other treatment by a health-care professional.

Authorization shall be obtained prior to commencing treatment by filling out the primary level authorization to treat document and faxing this document to the WCB. The primary level authorization to treat form can be found on the WCB website at the following link: wcbask.com/documents/primary-level-authorization-treat-massage-therapy-mcare. A response from the WCB must be obtained prior to commencing treatment.

Where the WCB has authorized massage therapy services, a maximum of five treatments will be funded. To prevent financial hardship to the injured worker, the member will invoice the WCB, not the injured worker, at the rate provided in Schedule B. The worker, the employer or insurance plans cannot be billed for amounts in excess of the fees noted in Schedule B.

Fees are payable on a per-visit basis, rather than an hourly or half hourly rates. Members may invoice the WCB online at wcbask.com.

G. Record keeping

The massage therapist will maintain a written record for each injured worker, which will include the assessment findings, the goals and objectives of treatment, treatment plan, treatment provided, periodic reviews and discharge summary. Initial assessment findings, where an initial report has been requested by the WCB, shall be sent to the WCB within three days of the assessment, a progress report, where requested by the WCB, shall be sent mid-course and a discharge summary, where requested by the WCB, shall be sent within three days of discharge.

All reports will identify, in functional terms, the progress that is being made towards the employment duties and the goals and objectives of treatment as identified by the referring licensed practitioner. Treatment will be discontinued where the discharge goals are met or where insufficient progress is demonstrated towards these goals as determined by the WCB's operations staff or the massage therapist or where the treatment approved by the WCB file manager has been completed.

Reporting forms for massage therapists are available online at wcbask.com and may be revised from time to time with input of the association.

H. Facility requirements

Treatment shall be provided in a treatment area designated solely for the provision of massage therapy or therapeutic services. Space, facilities and equipment shall be adequate to fulfill the needs of and be accessible to the types of injured workers served. The massage therapist shall treat in clinics that are accredited by the WCB and shall notify the WCB when the member moves, discontinues services in a clinic or begins providing service in a new location.

I. Continuing education

Where treatment facilities are shared by more than one massage therapist, there shall be a planned orientation program attended by all new staff. All massage therapists shall meet the continuing education requirements of the association and shall have knowledge of current massage therapy practice and treatment protocols.

J. Quality assurance

Within each clinic, there shall be a program to evaluate the quality and quantity of care provided. The evaluation shall include an evaluation of outcomes.

Compliance to practice standards for massage therapists providing primary level services to WCB injured workers may be monitored by the WCB with the input of the association.