

Spinal Manipulation Specialized Procedure

Information for Newly Rostered Physical Therapists

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The purpose of this document is to provide information to Saskatchewan Physical Therapists newly rostered in the Specialized Procedure of Spinal Manipulation.



Spinal Manipulation Specialized Procedure

To address public safety, the SCPT Bylaws identify activities with higher inherent risks, including acupuncture, dry needling, spinal manipulation, and invasive pelvic health as Specialized Procedures. It is essential that physiotherapists be aware of and respect all relevant Saskatchewan legislation regarding this area of practice including SCPT Bylaw 18:

SCPT Bylaw - Specialized procedures

18(1) In this section, “specialized physical therapy procedure” includes acupuncture, dry needling, spinal manipulation, and invasive techniques for the treatment of urogenital or rectal dysfunction.

(2) No member shall perform a specialized physical therapy procedure unless the member has successfully completed an educational program recognized by council and is registered in the roster maintained by the college.

(3) The council may recognize a university or post-graduate specialized procedure course that is evidence based and contains at the minimum the following:

- (a) the theoretical basis of the specialized procedure;*
- (b) safety, including potential medical and legal risks, cautions, contraindications of the specialized procedure;*
- (c) indications and best practices for the specialized procedure;*
- (d) relevant anatomy and physiology;*
- (e) a practical (clinical) component; and*
- (f) an examination component*

Roster

Spinal manipulation is considered to have innate patient risks that require specialized training and clinical experience to ensure efficacy, and patient safety. It is required that physiotherapists who wish to perform spinal manipulation techniques must meet specific education requirements and be included on the SCPT spinal manipulation roster.

The physiotherapy specialized procedure of spinal manipulation can encompass a wide variety of skills, obtained in a wide variety of educational settings, involving varied regions of the spine and neck therefore, depending on the level of education, physiotherapists may be rostered in one of two categories of spinal manipulation:

1. **Entry to Practice:** Basic spinal manipulation techniques, obtained at a graduate level, may be performed by a member without meeting any additional education requirements.
2. **Post Professional:** Members who have advanced their spinal manipulation education and skills through participation and certification in a Council approved course.

Spinal Manipulation Competence

SCPT requires members who perform spinal manipulation to perform only those procedures that they are competent, authorized or supervised to perform, and comply with all relevant legislation and regulatory requirements.

A physiotherapist's individual competence will be determined in part by the nature and extent of the continuing education undertaken. Although SCPT Council will review and may approve post-graduate courses for certification/rostering in Spinal Manipulation, it is essential that the physiotherapist understand that their individual competence may be limited, either by the nature of the education completed or due to limited clinical experience. In such cases, the physiotherapist has a professional obligation to limit their practice to the areas in which they are competent and to refer patients to other providers with greater skill or experience when another clinician best serves a patient's needs.

Individual PTs must be prepared to share with the public which spinal manipulation skills they offer and may be required to provide evidence of their education/training on request of the SCPT.

Restricted Licensees

It is required that Restricted Licensees who have certification in spinal manipulation and are rostered only perform those activities under the **supervision** of a regulated member who is also rostered and is competent in the same skills/techniques as the Restricted Licensee.

Key Points

- Complete the required level of training through a council approved course and practice only within their graduate or post professional level of competence.
- Be rostered with the SCPT as a practitioner authorized to practice the specialized procedure of spinal manipulation.
- Maintain competency in the specialized procedure including considering opportunities to receive mentorship to ensure ongoing clinical skill development.
- Read, understand, and agree to comply with the applicable Bylaws and Standards of Practice related to spinal manipulation.
- Practice only those techniques within their individual level of competence, provided it is appropriate for the client's condition and with their consent.
- Follow specific requirements related to restricted licensees.
- Transfer care to others, when indicated, to ensure safe effective patient care.
- Verify that there are policies and procedures in place related to the potential risks associated with spinal manipulation, identify risks related to their individual practice situation and take appropriate measures to mitigate/manage these risks.

Relevant Legislation, Bylaws, Standards, and Ethical Considerations

[The Physical Therapists Act, 1998](#)

[SCPT Regulatory Bylaws](#)

Bylaw 18 – Specialized Procedures

Bylaw 26 – Use of Instruments or Devices

[Standards of Practice for Physiotherapists in Saskatchewan](#)

Standard 6 Competence

Standard 8 Informed Consent

Standard 12 Infection Control

Standard 15 Professional Boundaries

Standard 17 Risk Management

Other Related Standards:

Standard 2 Client Assessment, Diagnosis, Interventions

Standard 3 Client Centered Care

Standard 5 Communication

Standard 9 Documentation

Standard 19 Supervision

[Code of Ethical Conduct for Canadian Physiotherapists](#)



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