

New Written Consent Requirements for Treating Sensitive Areas

Information for Registered Massage Therapists

The College of Massage Therapists of Ontario (CMTO) recently introduced new requirements for Massage Therapists (MTs or RMTs) in response to Ontario's [Protecting Patients Act, 2017](#), which aims to eradicate sexual abuse by health professionals.

CMTO has received a significant amount of feedback on the new [Standards for Maintaining Professional Boundaries and Preventing Sexual Abuse](#) (*Standards*) since we released them on September 21, 2017. We appreciate the feedback we have received. Thank you to those who have written, emailed, and communicated with us.

CMTO apologizes for any confusion caused by the release date for the *Standards*. The *Standards* were published by CMTO on September 21, 2017 but were approved by Council on September 11, 2017, at a public Council meeting. CMTO will release any future Standards with notice prior to them coming into effect.

The new requirements outlined in the *Standards for Maintaining Professional Boundaries and Preventing Sexual Abuse*, contain a number of changes that impact registrants. Included in the changes is a new requirement to strengthen the client's engagement in the consent process when treating sensitive areas (breasts, gluteal muscles/buttocks, upper inner thigh and anterior chest wall) by requiring written consent prior to treatment.

Most of the feedback from clients and RMTs focused on the sample consent form. In light of the feedback, CMTO has developed a new [streamlined sample written consent](#) form. The updated form is designed to be more user-friendly to clients, while improving their safety and CMTO's ability to protect the public interest when investigating complaints of a sexual nature.

A Frequently-Asked Questions document for RMTs has also been prepared to address the questions that CMTO has received. Please find *Frequently-Asked Questions for Massage Therapists* [here](#).

CMTO has also prepared information to help RMTs answer clients' questions about written consent for treating sensitive areas. Please find [client-focused information here](#).

Going forward, CMTO will continue to monitor the implementation of the new *Standards* and provide support to clients, and to RMTs, as they implement the new requirements into their everyday practice. Client-focused information has also been posted on CMTO's homepage.

CMTO expects to provide some additional guidance to assist you in implementing the new *Standards* in the future. Please stay tuned for this additional information, and continue to direct any questions you have to Marnie Lofsky, Director, Professional Practice at Marnie.Lofsky@cmt.com.