

Modalities, Techniques and Treatment Planning

The [Standard of Practice: Client-centred Care](#) requires Registered Massage Therapists (RMTs/MTs) to develop a treatment plan for each client, monitor the client's response and implement modifications when necessary. Treatment plans must follow directions from the Scope of Practice and the Standards of Practice.

The **Scope of Practice for Massage Therapy** is *the assessment of the soft tissues and joints of the body and the treatment and prevention of physical dysfunction and pain of soft tissues and joints by manipulation to develop, maintain, rehabilitate or augment physical function or relieve pain.*

The Scope of Practice provides a broad description of what Massage Therapy is and what it does, while the [Standards of Practice](#) describe expectations for how Massage Therapy should be delivered.

Incorporating modalities and techniques into treatment plans

Understanding whether modalities and techniques are suitable to incorporate into treatment plans is an important part of fulfilling expectations within the Standards of Practice.

RMTs can only use a modality or technique in Massage Therapy if:

- It does not include the use of a controlled act¹;
- It is being used to assess/treat soft tissues and joints of the body by **manipulation**, for the purposes of addressing physical function and/or pain. Some examples of modalities/techniques which are not considered within Scope include hydrotherapy float pools and wet cupping;
- It can be used in a way that meets all the requirements and outcomes within the Standards of Practice;
- They have the knowledge and skills needed to use it safely; and
- It is covered under their professional liability insurance policy.

When thinking about whether to incorporate a modality/technique into Massage Therapy, an RMT must confirm that it is not a controlled act. RMTs cannot perform controlled acts, except for acupuncture, which can only be used after obtaining authorization from CMTO.

If the modality/technique is not a controlled act, then RMTs can use the questions below to help determine whether it is appropriate to include a certain modality/technique in a Massage Therapy treatment plan.

¹RMTs cannot perform controlled acts, except for acupuncture, which can only be used after obtaining authorization from CMTO. [Learn more about Acupuncture authorization.](#)

1

Will the modality/technique be used to assess/treat soft tissues and joints by **manipulation**, to address physical function and/or pain?

Yes

No

Do not proceed with using it, as it is not within the Scope of Practice.

2



Is it possible to fulfill all the requirements and outcomes of the Standards of Practice when using the modality/technique?

(See next page for more details.)

Yes

No

Do not proceed with using it as the requirements and outcomes of the Standards of Practice cannot be achieved.

3

Do you have the knowledge and skills needed to use the modality/technique safely?

Yes

No

Do not proceed with using it until you have acquired the knowledge and skills to use it safely.

4

Does your professional liability insurance (PLI) cover the use of the modality/technique?

No

Do not proceed with using it until you have acquired professional liability insurance.

Yes

If all answers to the questions above are "Yes", then RMTs may choose to include the modality/technique as part of the treatment plan.



To figure out whether it is possible to meet the outcomes and requirements in the Standards of Practice, RMTs can consider questions such as:

- Can you assess the outcomes of using the modality/technique?
- Can you provide clients with all the information required for consent discussions?
- Are you able to address/control any additional risks of harm associated with using it?
- If there is equipment involved, can you clean and disinfect the equipment after each appointment according to the requirements in the [Standard of Practice: Infection Prevention and Control](#)?