



College of
Massage
Therapists of
Ontario

Touch Point

December 2024



CMTO's Prevention of Sexual Abuse Seminar

CMTO held its second Prevention of Sexual Abuse Seminar on November 15, 2024. At the event educators and instructors from private and public Massage Therapy programs across Ontario shared their perspectives and exchanged ideas on how to prevent the sexual abuse of clients in Massage Therapy by Registered Massage Therapists/Massage Therapists (RMT/MT).

The day began with a presentation on gender-based violence (GBV) from Jessica Pratezina and Premila Chellapermal from [WomanACT](#), a charitable organization working towards eradicating GBV through research, education and advocacy.

Following the presentation, a panel of healthcare professionals discussed how their respective professional schools teach sexual abuse prevention. Topics included how to stress the importance of ethics and professionalism early in a student's career, and the best way to establish and practise healthy boundaries with clients. This provided attendees valuable insights which may help enhance sexual abuse prevention education in their Massage Therapy programs. The panellists were:

- Irene Cohen: a retired MD and family physician, former investigator for the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario.
- Pam Fitch, M. Ad. Ed., RMT/MT: a former RMT/MT educator at Algonquin College.
- Brenda Mori, BScPT, MSc, PhD: Physical Therapy Professor, Director of Clinical Education & Community Affairs at the University of Toronto.

In the afternoon, attendees worked on case studies based on real cases before CMTO's Discipline Committee and participated in facilitated discussions. Topics included:

- Examining the power dynamics that exist between clients and RMTs/MTs due to the knowledge, authority and influence RMTs/MTs hold over their clients during treatment in a clinical setting;
- Identifying and addressing gaps in sexual abuse prevention in education;
- Recognize signs of sexual abuse and the significance of trauma-informed care; and
- Exploring solutions for preventing sexual abuse of Massage Therapy early in an RMT/MT's academic and professional career.

CMTO would like to thank all the participants and presenters for their contributions in making this seminar a success and a valuable learning experience.



Over the coming months, CMTO will develop a plan to further CMTO's work on the prevention of sexual abuse by:

- Hosting a Prevention of Sexual Abuse Seminar in 2025;
- Increasing engagement with educational programs about sexual abuse, professionalism, ethics, reporting, and boundaries; and
- Raising awareness of CMTO's role in sexual abuse prevention to the public, educators, RMTs, and students.

If you have questions about professionalism or preventing sexual abuse, please contact CMTO's Practice Specialist at practicespecialist@cmto.com.

Practice Advice: Navigating the Holiday Season as a Registered Massage Therapist

Below are answers to frequently asked questions received by CMTO's Practice Specialists about effectively navigating the holiday season with your clients.

A client paid for a treatment with a gift certificate, should I provide a receipt?

Yes. However, when the gift certificate is redeemed, a receipt for the dollar amount of the gift certificate cannot be issued. If the recipient wishes to receive a receipt, it must read "gift certificate redeemed" with no dollar amount provided. Please see the requirement 13 under [Standard of Practice: Fees and Billing](#) for more information.

Should I accept or give gifts to clients over the holidays?

Exchanging gifts with a client can challenge the boundaries of the professional relationship and raise concerns related to [conflicts of interest](#). In some circumstances, accepting gifts could be considered as engaging in [financial abuse](#) of a client. For example, if a client felt that giving a gift of significant value was expected and/or encouraged. As such, Registered Massage Therapists/Massage Therapists should not give or receive gifts from their clients.

Can I advertise a promotion with discounted prices for the holiday season?

If advertisements meet the requirements of the [Advertising Regulations](#) under the *Massage Therapy Act, 1991*, then RMTs/MTs may advertise holiday specials. For example, advertisements must be respectful of clients' choices and must not include undue pressure or the promotion of unnecessary services to clients.

It is important to ensure any holiday promotions are respectful and client-centred.

If you have further questions, please contact the Practice Specialist at practicespecialist@cmto.com or by phone 416-489-2626/1-800-465-1933, and press 5.

Discipline Decisions

When CMTO receives complaints, the Inquiries, Complaints and Reports Committee can refer serious allegations (e.g., sexual abuse or other professional misconduct) to the Discipline Committee. These decisions are public.

Since the last edition of [TouchPoint](#), CMTO's Discipline Committee issued the following decisions:

- **Xingwu (Mark) Li (October 2024)** [Read the full decision on CanLii.](#)
Engaged in professional misconduct by treating a client's sensitive areas without obtaining written consent, physically abusing a client, and failing to meet record-keeping requirements.
- **Gary Ho (September 2024)** [Read the full decision on CanLii.](#)
Engaged in professional misconduct by treating a client's sensitive areas without obtaining written consent.
- **Jesse Byers (September 2024)** [Read the full decision on CanLii.](#)
Engaged in professional misconduct including engaging in a sexual relationship with a client, and failing to maintain professional boundaries.
- **Oliver Long (September 2024)** [Read the full decision on CanLii.](#)
Engaged in professional misconduct due to criminal convictions for sexual offences against osteopathy clients in his prior career. The Discipline Committee found these offences were relevant to his suitability to practise Massage Therapy.
- **Mingya Kathy Kennedy (September 2024)** [Read the full decision on CanLii.](#)
Engaged in professional misconduct by using her position as a Massage Therapy educator to give students an unfair advantage by sharing privileged entry-to-practice exam information.

Welcome 2025 New Board Members!

Following Board Elections in the fall, we are pleased to welcome the following members to the 2025 Board:

- Charles Gollob, RMT/MT, District 8
 - **District 8:** the counties of Waterloo, Hamilton-Wentworth, Brant, Haldimand-Norfolk, and Niagara
- Robyn Libby, RMT/MT, District 4
 - **District 4:** the City of Toronto west from Yonge Street
- Lauren Carnegie, RMT/MT, District 3
 - **District 3:** the district municipality of Muskoka, the territorial district of Parry Sound, the counties of Haliburton, Peterborough, Northumberland, the City of Kawartha Lakes, and the regional municipalities of Durham and York

Congratulations to Lauren, Robyn, and Charles! They will join a committed team of Registered Massage Therapists/Massage Therapists (RMTs/MTs) and public members who work together to protect the public interest, maintain trust, and build confidence in Massage Therapy. They will begin their 3-year terms on January 1, 2025. We welcome them to the Board and thank all RMTs/MTs in Districts 3, 4, and 8 for participating in the nomination and election process.

Learn more about our 2025 Board Members below.

Charles Gollob, RMT/MT, District 3

Charles has been an RMT/MT since 1999, with extensive experience in private practice, multidisciplinary clinics, corporate environments, and franchises. Currently, Charles works alongside a team of chiropractors, RMTs/MTs, and social workers, providing holistic patient care.

Over the years, Charles has mentored junior therapists, sharing knowledge gained from two decades of practice. Believing in the importance of resilience, Charles empowers patients to stay active and enjoy the activities they love throughout their lives. Charles is excited to embark on this new journey and contribute to CMTO's mandate of protecting the public interest.

Robyn Libby, RMT/MT, District 4

Robyn is a seasoned RMT/MT with over 22 years of experience in Massage Therapy care. She graduated with honours from the Canadian College of Massage and Hydrotherapy and holds a Bachelor of Applied Arts from Toronto Metropolitan University.

Robyn is passionate about her profession and has over a decade of leadership experience. Over the span of her career, she has successfully supervised and mentored numerous RMTs/MTs in the luxury spa industry. She continues to guide her management team on how to seamlessly integrate regulatory compliance with luxury spa experiences, demonstrating her continued commitment to the highest standards of safety, service, and care.

Lauren Carnegie, RMT/MT, District 8

Lauren Carnegie has been an RMT/MT for nearly 20 years. She is currently practising Massage Therapy in Aurora, with a focus on rehabilitation and maintenance. Lauren was inspired to become an RMT/MT after being involved in a motor vehicle accident. After the accident, she experienced significant physical discomfort and found relief with Massage Therapy treatments. That's when she decided to change careers from the field of dentistry to Massage Therapy. Lauren recently completed a Human Resource Management program, and is looking forward to bringing her knowledge, skills, and experience to CMTO's Board.

Board Highlights

CMTO's Board met on December 2, 2024. Highlights from the meeting are below. [The complete meeting package is available on CMTO's website.](#)

- The Board approved:
 - 2025 Committee Slate;
 - 2024-Q3 Year-to-Date Financial Report;
 - 2025 Proposed Budget; and
 - 2025 Draft 2025 Board Workplan.
- The Board received a summary of CMTO's Prevention of Sexual Abuse Seminar which took place on November 15, 2024. For next steps, staff will develop a plan to further CMTO's work on the prevention of sexual abuse by:
 - Hosting a Prevention of Sexual Abuse Seminar in 2025;
 - Increasing engagement with educational programs about sexual abuse, professionalism, ethics, reporting, and boundaries; and
 - Raising awareness of CMTO's role in sexual abuse prevention with the public, educators, Registered Massage Therapists/Massage Therapists, and students.

To learn more about the event, check out our article about [CMTO's Prevention of Sexual Abuse Seminar](#).

- The Board also deferred its review of the discipline hearings tariff from December 2024 to 2025, pending CMTO's decision on its future role in the Health Professions Discipline Tribunal (HPDT).
- The Board received an update on CMTO's health history project. Following a recent consultation on a draft health history document, CMTO presented the Board with an analysis of feedback from the 521 respondents who participated in the consultation. CMTO is currently in the process of developing a policy response and plan that reflects the received feedback.