



# Notice to the Profession Scope of Practice of Registered Massage Therapists: Yoga

## **Applies to Registered Massage Therapists**

The College of Complementary Health Professionals of BC was created on June 28, 2024 through the amalgamation of four health regulatory colleges:

- College of Chiropractors of BC
- College of Massage Therapists of BC
- College of Naturopathic Physicians of BC
- College of Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners and Acupuncturists of BC

All current requirements for standards of clinical and ethical practice issued by the four colleges remain in place upon amalgamation.

This document was created by the College of Massage Therapists of BC and will be updated to reflect the amalgamation.

# Notice to the Profession

February 6, 2018

## Scope of Practice of Registered Massage Therapists: Yoga

CMTBC advises registrants that providing one-on-one yoga instruction to an individual does not fall within the scope of practice for massage therapy.

Effective immediately, registrants who currently provide and bill for one-on-one yoga instruction services as massage therapy services are advised to stop doing so.

### Scope of Practice

“Scope of practice” refers to the activities that registered massage therapists are educated and authorized to perform, which is established through the legislated definition of “massage therapy” in [section 1 of the \*Massage Therapists Regulation\*](#) (the “Regulation”).

The Regulation states that registrants of the College may practise massage therapy. Massage therapy is defined as meaning the health profession in which a person provides, for the purpose of developing, maintaining, rehabilitating or augmenting physical function, or relieving pain or promoting health, the services of

- a. assessment of soft tissue and joints of the body, and
- b. treatment and prevention of physical dysfunction, injury, pain and disorders of soft tissue and joints of the body by manipulation, mobilization and other manual methods.

While this definition does not expressly include, for example, formulating a treatment plan and designing a home care program, neither does it exclude those activities, which are important parts of massage therapy practice (and are expressly referenced in the College’s Standards of Practice).

It is within the scope of practice for registered massage therapists to make recommendations for home care that support a patient in his or her activities of daily living and provides tools to assist the patient in recovering from injury or weakness/reduced function. This may include providing home care instructions to patients who wish to use yoga for home care outside of the treatment room.

However, this is not the same as providing individualized or group yoga instruction, which does not constitute the practice of massage therapy.

Registrants may still provide services – such as one-on-one or group yoga instruction – that fall outside the scope of practice of a registered massage therapist if they comply with section 78.91 of the College’s Bylaws, which provides as follows:

### **Advertising of services that fall outside the scope of practice**

**78.91** If a Registrant is also trained to provide a service or technique that falls outside the scope of practice of a massage therapist as prescribed by the Regulation

- a. that Registrant may advertise that service or technique so long as
  - i. that non-massage therapy service is not linked to or associated with her status as a Registrant, and
  - ii. there is a clear separation of professional services that fall within and outside the scope of practice of Registrants,
- b. that Registrant must use separate letterhead, business cards, statements of account and similar documents for her non-massage therapy service, and
- c. that Registrant must not bill for massage therapy services while using an occupational title of the non- massage therapy profession.

In simple terms, this means that RMTs may provide a “service or technique” that is not massage therapy, but must not do so in a way that identifies them as RMTs or suggests that they are relying on their RMT status. Also, they are not permitted to bill for such services as massage therapy.

### **Standards of Practice**

The provision of (and billing for) individualized or group yoga instruction as a massage therapy service violates section 9(d) of the College’s Standards of Practice (Schedule “D” to the College’s Bylaws), which requires that registrants maintain awareness of, and practice within, the current scope of practice of massage therapy in British Columbia.

A violation of the College’s Standards of Practice may be subject to investigation and professional discipline under the *Health Professions Act*.