



# Notice to the Profession Shockwave Therapy is Not Within the Scope of Practice of Registered Massage Therapists

## **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

June 19, 2018

### Shockwave Therapy is Not Within the Scope of Practice of Registered Massage Therapists

CMTBC advises registrants that providing extracorporeal shockwave therapy to an individual does not fall within the scope of practice for massage therapy.

#### What is Extracorporeal Shockwave Therapy?

The College has commissioned a report which explains what extracorporeal shockwave therapy is and how it is generally used.

#### 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.

Registrants must practice within their scope of practice.

Effective immediately, registrants are advised to cease providing extracorporeal shockwave therapy as part of the provision of massage therapy, as it does not fall within the scope of practice for registered massage therapists.

Registrants may still provide services 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 in simple terms states 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.

However, registrants are advised that (1) providing extracorporeal shockwave therapy may constitute unauthorized practice of another regulated health profession and (2) there may be restrictions on the purchase of extracorporeal shockwave therapy devices.

### **Standards of Practice**

The provision of extracorporeal shockwave therapy as part of the provision of massage therapy 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*.

Effective **July 1, 2018**, if a registrant is providing extracorporeal shockwave therapy as part of his or her massage therapy practice, or in a manner that is linked to his or her massage therapy practice, the matter will be forwarded to the Inquiry Committee which may initiate an investigation under section 33(4) of the *Health Professions Act*.