

Scope of Practice Explanatory Statement

Chiropractic



April 1, 2026



This Scope of Practice Explanatory Statement provides supplemental guidance to the chiropractic scope of practice statement under the *Health Professions and Occupations Act* (HPOA) regulation. It is designed to help licensees understand the limits, conditions, and out of scope activities that shape which diagnostic, therapeutic, procedural, and prescriptive activities are permitted to support consistent, safe, and lawful practice. It consists of two parts:

1. Scope of Practice Statement under the *Complementary Health Professionals Regulation*
2. Explanatory Statement:
 - a. Restricted Activities
 - b. Limits and Conditions
 - c. Out of Scope Activities

Scope of Practice Statement

Scope of practice statements in regulation set out broadly what each regulated health professional may do. These statements are not exhaustive lists of every service the profession may provide, nor do they exclude other regulated professions or unregulated persons from providing services that fall within a particular profession's scope of practice. Some aspects of the scope of practice of a regulated health professional may overlap or be shared with those of another regulated health profession. Restricted activities, on the other hand, are defined higher-risk activities only allowed to be performed by authorized professionals or persons who have been appropriately delegated the activity.

Under the [Professional Standard: Scope of Practice](#), licensees must provide safe and competent care, maintain current knowledge and skills, and practice only within their individual and professional scope. Licensees are also responsible for ensuring they do not provide false or misleading information to patients or the public, and that their activities align with the limits and conditions established in legislation and regulation.



Complementary Health Professionals Regulation

Scope of practice for chiropractic

7 (1) *The following types of health services, provided primarily for the purposes set out in subsection (2), constitute the scope of practice for chiropractic:*

- (a)** *assessing the physical health status of patients for the purpose of providing the health services referred to in paragraph (b);*
- (b)** *preventing, treating and managing diseases, disorders and conditions of the neuromusculoskeletal system by manipulating or adjusting the spine and joints*
 - (i)** *by manual methods, or*
 - (ii)** *by using devices directly related to the manipulation or adjustment;*
- (c)** *advising on*
 - (i)** *the health and care of the spine, joints and tissue associated with the spine or joints, and*
 - (ii)** *the effect on the neuromusculoskeletal system of the matters referred to in subparagraph (i).*

(2) *The primary purposes for providing health services in the practice of chiropractic are the following, as they relate to the neuromusculoskeletal system:*

- (a)** *to promote, maintain and restore physical health as it relates to the diseases, disorders and conditions of that system;*
- (b)** *to rehabilitate and improve physical function; neuromusculoskeletal system by manipulating or adjusting the spine and joints*
- (c)** *to relieve pain.*



Licensees may continue to use adjunctive diagnostic and therapeutic procedures that are in the public domain provided they have the knowledge, skills and competence to perform the activity, and that they are applied directly within scope of practice, including but not limited to:

- i.** electrotherapies including TENS and therapeutic ultrasound
- ii.** Shockwave
- iii.** mechanical traction
- iv.** orthotics and braces
- v.** light therapy
- vi.** hot and cold therapy
- vii.** hydrotherapy
- viii.** thermography
- ix.** Surface EMG
- x.** exercise, nutritional and lifestyle counselling.

Explanatory Statement

Restricted Activities

The new regulations under the HPOA do not limit or reduce any profession's existing scope of practice they had under the *Health Professions Act*. This includes the continued authorization to perform the following restricted activities:



Diagnosis

(a) *diagnose disease, disorder or condition within the licensee's authorized scope of practice*

Imaging

(b) *issue an authorization to apply X-rays for diagnostic or imaging purposes, including for the purpose of a computed tomography scan*

(c) *apply X-rays for diagnostic or imaging purposes*

(d) *issue an authorization to apply electromagnetism for the purpose of magnetic resonance imaging*

Procedures

(e) *move a joint of the spine beyond the limits the body can voluntarily achieve but within the anatomical range of motion using a high velocity, low amplitude thrust*

(f) *insert an instrument, device, hand or finger into the external ear canal for the purpose of assessing the ear and auditory systems*

(g) *insert an instrument, device, hand or finger beyond the anal verge for the purpose of manipulating the coccyx*

Limits and Conditions

The following section outlines the limits and conditions that apply to the practice of chiropractic in BC.

Laser Therapies

Licensees must ensure that lasers used for treatment and/or procedures fall within scope of practice.

Devices must meet CSA standards and be approved by Health Canada.



Low Power Lasers

Non-pulsed visible lasers that have a power output of less than 1.0 milliwatt (class 1, 2, and 3a) are considered low power.

The use of class 1, 2 or 3a lasers requires:

- a. protective eyewear for patients and staff as specified by the manufacturer.
- b. a laser warning sign on the device.

High Power Lasers

Lasers that have a power output of 1.0 - 5.0 milliwatts (class 3b and 4) are considered to be high power.

The use of class 3b or 4 lasers requires:

- a. protective eyewear for patients and staff as specified by the manufacturer
- b. a laser warning sign on the device.
- c. a laser warning sign in the area of use.

Licensees must meet all federal and provincial requirements respecting the use of lasers in practice.

A qualified **Laser Safety Officer (LSO)** must be designated and properly trained in all relevant settings.

Laser Maintenance

Laser output should be tested and recalibrated as specified in the manufacturer's manual. These records must be maintained.

Laser heads must be cleaned after each use.



Nutritional Supplements

Licensees may recommend nutritional supplements, consisting of vitamins, minerals and natural health products approved by Health Canada, as an adjunct to treatment related to:

- (i) the health and care of the spine, joints and tissue associated with the spine or joints, and
- (ii) the effect on the neuromusculoskeletal system of the matters referred to in subparagraph (i).

Out of Scope Activities

The following section outlines the out of scope activities that apply to the practice of chiropractic in BC.

- A. Internal and external vaginal examinations or adjustments
- B. Prostate examinations
- C. Visceral manipulation
- D. Muscle or Vega testing for food allergies, nutritional deficiencies, or visceral dysfunction
- E. Kinesiology methods or techniques called Moding or Hand Moding
- F. Use of any procedure involving the testing of a person other than the patient
- G. Use of the Toftness Radiation Detector or sensometer
- H. Supplying supplements for and monitoring a very low-calorie diet program
- I. Must **not** represent to patients or the public that chiropractic can be used to treat diseases, disorders or conditions including but not limited to:
 - i) Alzheimer's disease
 - ii) cancer
 - iii) diabetes
 - iv) infections
 - v) infertility, or
 - vi) Tourette's syndrome



J. Must **not** represent to patients or the public that chiropractic has any beneficial effect on childhood diseases, disorders or conditions, fetal development or position, labour and/or birth or hormone regulation and function including but not limited to:

- i)** ADHD (or ADD)
- ii)** Autism spectrum disorders including Asperger syndrome, cerebral palsy, Down syndrome, fetal alcohol syndrome, or developmental and speech disorders.
- iii)** breech/breech turning or position and intrauterine/in utero constraint
- iv)** easier or shorter labour, preventing the need for medical interventions and preventing premature or traumatic birth
- v)** hormone regulation or reduce postpartum depression
- vi)** turning into head down position
- vii)** moving or providing optimal position
- viii)** improved infant position at birth
- ix)** optimal uterine environment
- x)** room to develop in the uterus
- xi)** increasing baby's health and well being
- xii)** assist in baby's growth
- xiii)** better baby development
- xiv)** tension, torsion or distortion of the uterus
- xv)** shorter birth times
- xvi)** difficult labor or dystocia
- xvii)** improved birth outcomes
- xviii)** treating birth trauma
- xix)** traumatic delivery
- xx)** preventing premature birth



- xxi)** preventing forceful extraction (forceps or suction)
- xxii)** avoiding a caesarean section
- xxiii)** preventing damage or subluxation to the infant spine in-utero
- xxiv)** improving comfort of baby in-utero

K. Any other procedure that constitute restricted activities outside their authorized scope of practice, as outlined in the [Regulated Health Practitioners Regulation](#), including but not limited to:

- i)** apply ultrasound for diagnostic or imaging purposes
- ii)** manage labour or delivery of a baby
- iii)** perform a procedure on tissue below the dermis
- iv)** perform a procedure on tissue below the surface of a mucous membrane