



POSITION STATEMENT

BILLING PRACTICES

The College frequently receives requests for information from various members of the public and the profession regarding the billing practices of registered physiotherapists.

A. Fees

- A patient has the right not to be discriminated against, with respect to the fee charged, based on his ability to pay.
- It is unacceptable to charge a fee greater than the physiotherapists' normal fee to one patient over another for the same treatment.
- When reimbursement is provided by the health insurance plan, i.e. in a Schedule 5 facility, it is acceptable to charge a reasonable fee for assessment.

However, it may be appropriate to reduce or waive a fee that would normally be charged where the patient would otherwise effectively be deprived of physiotherapy services. For example, a valid financial, social or professional reason may justify a discount.

B. Collection of Co-payments

- When the patient's insurance policy covers only a percentage of the treatment costs (e.g. 80% covered by the insurance plan and 20% by the patient), the physiotherapist must make reasonable efforts to collect the patient's portion of the fee. Any waiving of the co-payment must only occur if the insurer consents to this practice.

Insurers use co-payment mechanisms when underwriting insurance policies to contain costs and to encourage patient responsibility for their own health care. If practitioners waive the patient's portion of the fee, they are allowing the patient to receive a benefit to which he/she is not entitled.

C. Billing for Multiple Treatments

- A patient has the right to be charged a fee that is not excessive in relation to the services performed.
- When a patient presents with multiple dysfunctions, the practitioner may provide two or more treatments. Where distinct and separate dysfunctions are present and, distinct and separate assessments and treatments are provided, or where similar treatments are provided at distinct times and those distinct times are necessary for appropriate treatment, the practitioner may be justified in billing for each treatment.

However, multiple billing or billing for each treatment may not be appropriate and may be deemed excessive in relation to the services performed where the dysfunctions are not distinct and separate.

D. Steering

- A patient has the right to make an informed choice when deciding between the services offered by various physiotherapists.
- Where the practitioner indicates to the patient that a referral to another physiotherapist and/or facility would be desirable, the practitioner must endeavor to make full and honest disclosure.

Note: The term "client" and "patient" may be used interchangeably.

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Some of the items that a patient can reasonably expect to be informed about are:

- a. the reasons for the referral elsewhere;
- b. the relative costs of services;
- c. the convenience to the patient;
- d. who would be treating the patient (if the patient has an established relationship with a particular therapist); and
- e. whether the practitioner has any interest or involvement in the referral.

NOTE: It may be considered professional misconduct to charge fees excessive to the services being rendered.

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The information contained in this position statement may be time limited. Persons referring to this information more than two years from the date of publication should contact the College to confirm that the information is current.