

# Official Marks

What physiotherapists\* need to know

**Official marks** are words that have been registered with the Canadian Intellectual Property Office through the federal Trade-marks Act. The Canadian Alliance of Physiotherapy Regulators (The Alliance), has the authority for the use of official marks throughout Canada for the profession that include practice words (e.g. physiotherapy\* and physical therapy) and title words (e.g. physical therapist, physiotherapist and PT).

The Alliance delegates authority for the use of these words to individually registered/licensed physiotherapists through their provincial/territorial physiotherapy regulators, and to related physiotherapy organizations such as the Canadian Physiotherapy Association, and accredited physiotherapy educational programs. All jurisdictions have protection of title in their regulations, but not all have protection of practice words.

Registered physiotherapists should be aware of the appropriate usage of these marks as it relates to the protection of the public. The public must be able to identify those individuals registered as physiotherapists. Through advertising, communications and marketing material, physical therapists can help to protect the public interest by using these words in a consistent manner.

**Title protection** - provincial and territorial legislation stipulates that no persons other than registrants of a provincial or territorial regulator may use the titles “physical therapist”, “physiotherapist” and the abbreviation “PT”. The intent of the legislation is to protect the public by ensuring appropriate and authorized use of title. The granting of title is a privilege awarded to members of a regulatory jurisdiction who have demonstrated that they possess the required educational qualifications, knowledge, skills and attributes to practice their profession and are accountable for the delivery of professional services. Title provides members of the public with important information about the titleholder.

## Regulators

Yukon Consumer Services

College of Physical Therapists of British Columbia

College of Physical Therapists of Alberta

Saskatchewan College of Physical Therapists

College of Physiotherapists of Manitoba

College of Physiotherapists of Ontario

Ordre professionnel de la physiothérapie du Québec

College of Physiotherapists of New Brunswick/  
Collège des physiothérapeutes du Nouveau-Brunswick

Nova Scotia College of Physiotherapists

Prince Edward Island College of Physiotherapists

Newfoundland and Labrador College of Physiotherapists



**Always use your title before your academic credential.** What differentiates you as a regulated health professional is your use of title - not the fact that you have an academic degree. Check to see if your Regulator has standards in place and if not, refer to The Alliance’s National Guidelines For the Use of Title and Credentials By Physiotherapists In Canada ([www.alliancept.org](http://www.alliancept.org)) for comprehensive guidelines on the appropriate use of title, title abbreviations and credentials. An example of a business card: Jean Martin, Physiotherapist or PT, BSc (PT), MBA.

**Highlight official marks with an asterisk\*** when using title (and practice) words in communication materials and in a footnote at the bottom of the page, or in another area as appropriate, provide this information: *\*Physiotherapist and related words are official marks used with permission by registered physiotherapists.* Please see The Alliance’s Official Marks Style Sheet ([www.alliancept.org](http://www.alliancept.org)) for more details and options.

**If an individual represents himself/herself as a physiotherapist when not registered or licensed** such as using the title in an advertisement, the physiotherapy regulator should be notified. Each Regulator monitors the use of official marks within its jurisdiction and takes measures to stop inappropriate usage.

**Practice term protection** varies across the country. In jurisdictions where there is some protection, regulators may be able to address concerns if an individual is holding themselves out to practice the profession as opposed to using title. In some instances, members of another profession may be able to use the term “physiotherapy” if they have legitimately been using it before it was registered.

**Consider how you use practice terms.**

Appropriate use is essential to assist the public to understand what physiotherapists do. Physiotherapy is what physiotherapists do on a daily basis. Physiotherapy is not a generic term and should not be used to describe interventions. Use the proper term and avoid using the more informal term “physio”.

Jurisdiction	'Physiotherapy' protected?
Yukon	Yes
British Columbia	No
Alberta	Yes
Saskatchewan	No
Manitoba	No
Ontario	No
Quebec	No
New Brunswick	Yes
Nova Scotia	Yes
Prince Edward Island	Yes
Newfoundland & Labrador	Yes

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