



**MASSAGE THERAPY
ASSOCIATION OF MANITOBA**

Code of Ethics

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The Massage Therapy Association of Manitoba Members abide by this code. This document originally adapted with permission from the College of Massage Therapists of Ontario but undergoes review or revision as required and approved by members.

www.mtam.mb.ca

MTAM Code of Ethics

Table of Contents

Preface Statements	3
MTAM Mission Statement and Mandate	4
General Principles Which Guide the Practice of Massage Therapy.....	5
Principle I – Respect For Persons	5
Principle II – Responsible Caring.....	6
Principle III – Integrity in Relationships	6
Principle IV – Responsibility to Society.....	7

MTAM Code of Ethics

Preface Statements

What is a Code of Ethics?

A Code of Ethics is a statement that expresses the primary ethical values, obligations and goals of the profession. It is a commitment that serves to bear witness to our promise as a profession to uphold the values and ethical obligations expressed in the Code.

Why do we need a Code of Ethics?

A Code of Ethics gives definition to our commitment to practice in ethical terms. As health professionals, we have made a promise to society to accept the responsibility and maintain the trust with which we have been invested.

What does a Code of Ethics do?

It lays out clearly the massage therapy profession's values and explains what they are in terms of what we ought to do in order to protect and promote the public good, and what we must avoid doing in order to prevent harm to the public.

To whom does this Code apply?

All MTAM members, MTAM employees and MTAM contractors are expected to maintain a commitment to massage therapy values and to follow the principles outlined in this Code.

What is Massage Therapy?

Massage Therapy is the art, philosophy and science of treatment by systematic manipulation of the soft tissues of the body. The Scope of Practice of massage therapy is "The practice of massage therapy is the assessment of the soft tissue and joints of the body and the treatment and prevention of physical dysfunction and pain of the soft tissues and joints by manipulation to develop, maintain, rehabilitate or augment physical function, or relieve pain." (Massage Therapy Act of Ontario 1991)

MTAM Code of Ethics

MTAM Mission Statement and Mandate

Mission Statement

The mission of the Massage Therapy Association of Manitoba, Inc. is to promote and enhance the art, science and philosophy of massage therapy in a professional and ethical manner to ensure the highest level of competency-based practice for massage therapy within the province of Manitoba.

Purposes

1. Protect the public by ensuring safe, competent and ethical massage practise, accomplished by examination, registration and disciplinary processes;
2. Represent members before governmental and regulatory bodies concerned with massage therapy;
3. Foster and encourage professional growth among members;
4. Ensure high standards of education for students of massage therapy;
5. Promote the art, philosophy and science of massage therapy;
6. To serve our members with care and compassion.

MTAM Code of Ethics

General Principles Which Guide the Practice of Massage Therapy

Principle I – Respect for Persons

Principle II – Responsible Caring

Principle III – Integrity in Relationships

Principle IV – Responsibility to Society

Explanatory and Interpretive Statements of General Principles

Principle I – Respect for Persons

1. **Meaning:** To value the dignity and worth of all persons regardless of age, race, culture, creed, sexual identity, gender, physical ability, mental ability, and/or health status.
2. **Application:** Patient autonomy is demonstrated by:
 - a) ensuring that patients are as fully involved as possible in the planning and implementation of their own health care;
 - b) providing complete and accurate information in a sensitive and timely fashion to enable patients, or when necessary a patient's power of attorney or substitute decision maker, to make informed choices;
 - c) listening to and respecting a patient's values, opinions, needs and cultural beliefs;
 - d) encouraging and being responsive to patients' choices to accept, augment, modify, refuse or terminate treatment;
 - e) being informed about moral and legal rights of patients;
 - f) advocating for and supporting patients in exercising their moral and legal rights; and
 - g) safeguarding the patient's right to privacy and confidentiality by holding all personal and health information in confidence unless otherwise required by law.

MTAM Code of Ethics

Principle II – Responsible Caring

1. **Meaning:** Providing sensitive, compassionate and empathetic quality massage therapy.
2. **Application:** Responsible care of patients is demonstrated by:
 - a) listening to and respecting the patients' values, opinions, needs and cultural beliefs;
 - b) promoting the patient's best interest and well being, through the highest possible standard of professional practice;
 - c) seeking assistance when conflicts arise between the value systems of the practitioner and the patient;
 - d) recognizing and referring the patient to other health care providers when it is in the patient's best interest to do so;
 - e) being alert to and reporting, as required, any unethical practice by any member of MTAM;
 - f) approaching and co-operating with a power of attorney or substitute decision maker in assessing the patient's wishes and best interests in the event of incapacity;
 - g) protecting the patient's privacy; and
 - h) with the prior consent of the patient, collecting only information, which is relevant to the provision of health, care.

Principle III – Integrity in Relationships

1. **Meaning:** To practice with integrity, honesty and diligence in professional relationships with patients, ourselves and our professional colleagues.
2. **Application:**
 - a) Commitments to patients are demonstrated by:
 - ensuring that we always act in our patient's best interest as defined by the patient's wishes and consistent with the standards of practice of MTAM;
 - informing patients on health care services available to support them;
 - referring to other health care providers as necessary and appropriate;
 - obtaining assistance when value conflicts arise which threaten to impede patient autonomy;
 - providing patient centred health care which includes explaining to patients and advocating for their right to receive information about, and take control of their health care;
 - providing information about the proposed treatment, alternative courses of action, the material effects, risks and side effects in each case and the consequences of not having the treatment;
 - assisting patients to comprehend information; and
 - responding to questions about patient health care and/or treatment.
 - b) Commitments to ourselves are demonstrated by:

MTAM Code of Ethics

- being proactively committed to our own health, and to our own personal and professional development;
 - being competent, conscientious and empathetic practitioners;
 - being aware of our personal values and being able to identify when value conflicts interfere with patient care; and
 - keeping our professional commitment by integrating massage values and principles in our daily practices.
- c) Commitments to our professional colleagues are demonstrated by:
- respecting our colleagues and working cooperatively with them;
 - intervening in situations where the safety and well-being of a patient is in jeopardy;
 - reporting to appropriate authorities any health care practitioner who abuses a patient physically, verbally, sexually or financially;
 - referring to other health care providers when necessary and appropriate;
 - contributing to continuous quality improvement initiatives;
 - complying with the codes, guidelines, policies, practices, procedures and standards of MTAM;
 - advocating with other health care providers to promote and support social changes that enhance individual and community health and well-being; and
 - representing ourselves honestly, and performing only those services for which we are qualified.

Principle IV – Responsibility to Society

1. **Meaning:** To be accountable to society and conduct ourselves in a manner that fosters and promotes high ethical standards.
2. **Application:** Ethical practice is demonstrated by:
 - a) pursuing continued career-long, professional learning;
 - b) participating in the promotion of the profession of massage therapy through advocacy, research and maintenance of the highest possible standards of practice;
 - c) being committed to promoting the welfare and well-being of all persons in society;
 - d) making every reasonable effort to ascertain that our clinical environment will permit provision of care consistent with the values in the Code of Ethics;
 - e) committing to continuous improvement and implementation of Standards of Practice;
 - f) collaborating with other health care professions to meet the health needs of the public; and continuing to develop ways to clarify massage therapist’s role in society.