

ACUPUNCTURE

Policy

Original Policy Passed: November 28, 2011

Effective as of: November 28, 2011

Last Reviewed or Revised: January 1, 2017

Background

Acupuncture, is a modality that can reasonably be expected to affect soft tissues and joints of the body and constitutes 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", and therefore is within the scope of practice of massage therapy.

Definitions

Massage Therapy Scope of Practice: "The scope of practice of massage therapy is the assessment of the soft tissues 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."

Acupuncture can be practiced by RMTs only if it is provided within the massage therapy scope or practice and the RMT has successfully completed acupuncture training that has been approved by the MTAM.

A massage therapy assessment must first be performed in accordance with the Standards of Practice. Should it be determined that acupuncture is an appropriate treatment for the presenting soft tissue condition, the massage therapist may incorporate acupuncture into the treatment plan. Acupuncture becomes a modality used within the massage therapy treatment.

The acupuncture policy requires acupuncture to be provided only within the scope of practice of the profession, acupuncture cannot be used for weight loss, for example. RMTs must also provide acupuncture in accordance with Additional Technique Standard 2 – Perform an Acupuncture Treatment. When acupuncture is performed within the massage therapy scope of practice, and in accordance with the Standards of Practice it may be billed as massage therapy.

Massage therapists may not use the title, Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioner or acupuncturist, or any other variation, without further training in those areas of practice.