

WHO AM I? *TITLES, ACADEMIC & PROFESSIONAL CREDENTIALS IN PRACTICE*

Introduction

The governing body of a profession often outlines the use of professional titles in healthcare. The Massage Therapy Association of Manitoba has created this outline to assist our members in proper use of their credentials in marketing and in general.

Massage therapists who hold degrees or diplomas or are registered with another college in other areas of healthcare need to be cautious when representing their massage therapy practice within the context of any marketing outreach or in their treatments that include other healthcare practices or modalities.

Details

Please refer to the **MTAM Advertising & Marketing Policy** for elaboration on this and other important areas of marketing. The following are the MTAM's general rules and recommendations for using titles, academic and professional credentials in practice:

- **Recognized Credentials**

Academic degrees or certificates from recognized universities, colleges and/or private vocational schools can be used in conjunction with a Registered Massage Therapist title. Whether a school or specific credentials are recognized in Manitoba is defined by *The Private Vocational Institutions Act* and by the governing body of a specific profession (e.g. Physicians). Members may use degrees or degree abbreviations as a suffix to their name if the degree is from a recognized institution and they have met any criteria of the governing body to use it.

Example: Sarah Smith BSc, RMT

- **Credential Suffixes**

It is traditional that credential letters are presented in order of how they were earned and in the case of a professional designation and academic degree, the degree should come first.

Example: Sarah Smith PhD, CPA, RMT

- **Titles in Marketing**

The order of title and other academic credentials should be consistent with the main work focus/practice of the member and should not mislead the public or misrepresent the ability of the member. If a member holds another designation or is a licensed professional with another college, that member may use the other profession's occupational title in advertising, but in so

WHO AM I? TITLES, ACADEMIC & PROFESSIONAL CREDENTIALS IN PRACTICE

doing the member must clearly distinguish between the services she or he provides so that the public would not be confused by the dual listing.

Misrepresentative:

Dr. Sarah Smith DC, RMT

Here it could insinuate that the Dr. is related to being an RMT.

Better:

Sarah Smith DC, RMT

Chiropractor, Registered Massage Therapist

Best:

Sarah Smith

Doctor of Chiropractic

Registered Massage Therapist

- **Where language rules meet ethics**

In proper writing style, the rule exists that you **do not** use titles such as Dr. Mr. Miss or Ms. before a person's name if an academic degree follows the person's name. Our recommendation of a very important boundary is the same. If you use Dr. M. Therapist, RMT: you are breaking a language rule and crossing into an ethical area that implies a superior ability.

Misrepresentative:

Dr. Doug Smyth Ph.D., C.Psych, RMT

Better:

Dr. Doug Smyth

Doctor of Psychology

Certified Psychologist

Registered Massage Therapist

Best:

Doug Smyth, Ph.D., C.Psych, RMT

Doctor of Psychology, Certified Psychologist, Registered Massage Therapist

- Consistent with the MTAM Advertising & Marketing Policy, you may offer and promote only those services you are **qualified to perform**. You are responsible for ensuring that you have

WHO AM I? TITLES, ACADEMIC & PROFESSIONAL CREDENTIALS IN PRACTICE

achieved a professional level of knowledge and skill in every area of practice, which you promote to the public.

- The use of any other title, term or designation that indicates or implies the member is a specialist in an aspect of massage therapy that is not an area of specialty with its own professional credential is not permitted. A member may state that the listed service or technique is a “preferred area of practice” or “area of focus” but must not otherwise use any other expression that might suggest or denote they are a “specialist” which may imply they are better than someone else.

Misrepresentative:

Joe Smithen, Pregnancy RMT

Better:

Joe Smithen, RMT

Preferred Area of Practice: Pregnancy Massage

Best:

Joe Smithen, RMT

Trained in Pregnancy Massage

- Do not make up titles. Even popular industry-led education do not have established professional standards or industry-approved licensing regulations that would appropriately and legally confer a title.
- Avoid any situation where the public may misinterpret other titles as specialized fields of knowledge with established professional standards of practice and licensing regulations.
- Any massage therapist who purposefully treats from the auspices of another health care therapy (e.g. osteopathy) and uses their massage therapy registration number to support their patient’s insurance claim would be committing insurance fraud.

This recommendation document was last updated: May 2017