CODE OF PRACTICE - PHYSIOTHERAPY

PRODUCED BY THE COUNCIL FOR THE PROFESSIONS COMPLEMENTARY TO MEDICINE

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Physiotherapy is a science-based profession, which views human movement as central to the health and well-being of individuals. Physiotherapists identify and maximize movement potential through health promotion, preventive health care, treatment and rehabilitation.

1. Respect for the patient as an individual is central to all aspects of the physiotherapeutic relationship and should be demonstrated at all times, ensuring that professional responsibilities and standards of practice are not influenced by age, gender, religion, sexual preference, nationality, party politics, social or economic status or nature of a patient's health problems.

2. Patients are given information about the proposed physiotherapy procedure, taking into account their age, emotional state and cognitive ability, to allow informed consent.

3. Information which the patient gives to the physiotherapist is to be treated in the strictest confidence. No information may be disclosed without the consent (preferably written) of the patient, except when compelled by law.

4. In order to deliver effective care, information relating to treatment options is identified, based on the best available evidence.

5. Information relating to the patient and his/her presenting problem is collected via the assessment and recorded.

6. Taking account of the patient's problems, continual re-assessment is done to evaluate the change in the patient's health status. This is recorded.

7. Following information gathering and assessment, analysis will be undertaken in order to formulate a treatment plan. This is to be recorded.

8. Every patient who receives physiotherapy must have a record which includes information associated with each episode of care. Patient records are signed and retained in accordance with existing policies.

9. A treatment plan is formulated in partnership with the patient/ relatives/ carers/ guardian.

10. The treatment plan is delivered in a way that benefits the patient, ensuring that it is effective and relevant to the patient's circumstances and health status.

11. On completion of treatment plan, arrangements are made for the transfer of care/ discharge.

12. Physiotherapists should communicate effectively with registered medical practitioners, other health professionals and relevant outside agencies to provide effective and efficient service to the patient.

13. Patients are treated in an environment that is safe for patients, physiotherapists and relatives/ carers, ensuring that actual and/or potential risks (equipment, environment, actual treatment) are eliminated.

14. Physiotherapists are obliged to take all reasonable measures to eliminate or minimize the risks of working alone.

15. The physiotherapist assesses his/ her learning needs, plans his/ her continuing professional development and implements the plan.

The intention of this Code of Practice is that it may apply to all physiotherapists. This encompasses physiotherapists working in the Health Division, private sector, voluntary and independently funded organizations, in any specialty and setting.

It is highly recommended that every Physiotherapist carries out Continuing Professional Development.