



Provider Identity Theft

information for your protection

As a physiotherapist, you will use your name, professional title and provider number when billing for the care you provide. You are responsible for monitoring the accuracy of the invoices provided to your patients or to those funding your services. Unfortunately, identity theft occurs in health care as it does elsewhere, with billions of dollars of insurance premiums lost to fraudulent activity and criminal organizations every year.

The Insurance Bureau of Canada (IBC) fields complaints from registered health practitioners, including physiotherapists, who have been victims of identity fraud. In provider identity fraud, criminals use the health provider's identity to fraudulently bill insurers for health care services that were never rendered.

This could occur when:

- 1 A clinic uses a current physiotherapist's identity for purposes unknown to, and unauthorized by, that person;
- 2 A clinic uses the identity of a physiotherapist who has never been employed there, for purposes unknown to, and unauthorized by, that person;
- 3 A clinic uses the identity of a former physiotherapist for purposes unknown to, and unauthorized by, that person;
- 4 A franchise or group of privately owned clinics uses a physiotherapist's identity to bill for services provided at more than one location on a given day.

Did you know that you are responsible for all billings submitted under your registration number? You can be held accountable by your regulatory College even if you are not involved in any misuse of your number. Don't let provider identity theft happen to you! There are steps that you can take to reduce the risk of your provider identity being used in a fraudulent manner:

- Regularly monitor or audit the invoices provided to your patients or to those funding your services to ensure accuracy. Be aware of how and when your provider number (i.e.: your billing / registration number) is being used;
- Keep up-to-date clinical notes and records so that you are able to accurately identify any errors found when monitoring the invoices provided;
- Update your regulatory College, insurers, and other relevant contacts with any changes to your place of employment;
- Update your regulatory College with any changes to your contact information so that they are able to reach you if identity theft is suspected;
- Protect your professional identity at all times. You may want to reconsider including your provider number on your resume or your business cards;
- Never sign blank forms. Keep electronic signatures and rubber stamps of your signature and / or provider number in a secure location for your access only.

If you think your registration number has been misused, you should contact the Insurance Bureau of Canada at 1-416-362-2031. You should also contact the College where you are registered.

If you have any questions about provider identity theft or other practice risk management issues, please contact CPA at risk@physiotherapy.ca or **1-800-387-8679**.

