POSITION STATEMENT

Issued: July 2009  Replaces: December 2008

Pelvic Floor Assessment and Treatment

Responsibility: College Members

Position:

The Nova Scotia College of Physiotherapists recognizes that, while internal pelvic floor assessment and treatment is not an entry-level skill for all physiotherapists, it does fall within the scope of physiotherapy practice.

Physiotherapists must have completed a post graduate education and training session approved by the Board in order to carry out pelvic floor assessment and treatments for urogenital and rectal dysfunction. The training must include a practical component and a certificate indicating successful completion of the training through demonstration of knowledge and techniques.

Rationale:

Physiotherapists are trained professionals with the knowledge and skills to evaluate musculoskeletal alignment, strength, tone, sensation and function; to identify dysfunction and the origin of that dysfunction; to develop and carryout an appropriate treatment regime and evaluate the outcomes. Internal examination of the pelvic floor muscle is consistent with physiotherapy practice. It requires the testing and measurements of neuromuscular functions as a part of the examination, assessment and treatment of specific medical conditions.

Training:

In the interest of public safety, physiotherapists must have completed appropriate post graduate education and training in the assessment and treatment of urogenital and rectal dysfunctions in order to carry out internal pelvic assessments and treatments. They should be able to demonstrate:

- Knowledge of detailed anatomy and physiology of the pelvic region.
- Awareness of conditions that are amenable to treatment.
- Practice of muscle testing, exercises and manual techniques/massage specific to pelvic floor region.
- Understanding of posture and treatment of postural problems.
- Understanding of ultrasound, electrical stimulation and biofeedback techniques as well as the indications and contraindications of each.
- Knowledge of infection control techniques.
Process:
It is essential that the physiotherapist obtains informed consent (written is preferred) and follows The Standards of Practice of the Nova Scotia College of Physiotherapists 2008. In performing the assessment and treatment the Standards require:

- **Evaluation / Assessment** … undertaken with sensitivity and tact ensuring privacy from sight and sound in view of the sensitive nature of the problem. An additional person may be present to act as client advocate and to ensure effective communication imperative to enable informed consent.
- **Analysis / Plan of Treatment** … developed in consultation with the client concerning treatment options and is consistent with current physiotherapy practice for the identified condition.
- **Evaluation / Review /Education** … should occur at each visit.
- **Appropriate Documentation** … in accordance with the NSCP Standards in a format accepted by your facility.

Treatments:
Treatments are tailored to each individual patient’s needs and may include:

- Education
- Pelvic floor muscle re-education
- Electrical muscle stimulation using internal / external electrodes
- Biofeedback using cones, internal/external treatment devices electrical or pressure
- Modalities—Ultrasound /SWD /IFC /TENS /acupuncture
- Manual techniques for relaxation /myofascial release / massage /fascilitation
- Stretching with insertion devices (dilators)

Additional Resources:

- *PT Practice Policy* in the Treatment of urogenital and rectal disorders prepared for the IWK/Women’s Health Centre
- For information on informed consent see the Health Care (Consent) and Care Facility (Admission) Act at www.gp.gov.bc.ca/statreg/stat/H/96181_01.htm and the Infant’s Act at http://www.gp.gov.bc.ca/statreg/stat/I/96223_01.htm#section17

For information on Standard Precautions and current infection control guidelines visit:

World Health Organization website at www.wpro.who.int/sars/docs/practicalguidelines/dec2004/chapter3.pdf

BC Centre for Disease Control website at http://www.bccdc.ca


Public Health Agency of Canada – www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/dpg_e.html#infection

Approved by the NSCP Board of Directors July 23rd, 2009