

ACUPUNCTURE POLICY

Definition:

Acupuncture, by regulation means the stimulation of a certain point or points on or near the surface of the body by the insertion of needles.

Statement:

Physiotherapists who practice Acupuncture, must hold a valid licence to practice Physiotherapy; has successfully completed a post- graduate training program in basic acupuncture from the Acupuncture Foundation of Canada,(AFC) or such equivalent as the council may approve; or is enrolled in the training program of the AFC, and has successfully completed the first main level; will only use those acupuncture procedures in which she/he has completed training; and has formal arrangement for expert advice, with a consultant qualified through successful completion of the training program of the AFC or approved equivalent program.

Rationale:

Physiotherapists' education provides a professional foundation whereby the use of needles in acupuncture can legitimately be incorporated into the practice of Physiotherapy.

Standards of Practice:

A Physiotherapist can incorporate the use of acupuncture into their treatments ONLY if they have been granted a specialist certificate and their names are on the Registrar's roster along with the levels they have achieved.

Physiotherapists adhere to universal precautions

Individuals receiving acupuncture must be able to access the physiotherapist throughout the treatment.

Only sterile single- use needles are used. Used needles must be disposed of in puncture-resistant sharps containers with lids.

It is recommended the physiotherapist who inserts the needles, is the physiotherapist who removes the needles. The needle shaft must be maintained in a sterile state throughout the treatment. If the needle shaft is contaminated by the practitioner's hand or by another non-sterile object or surface, the needle must not be used.

Sterile guide tubes are for single patient use only and must be disposed of immediately after treatment.

Needle manipulation must be performed without the practitioner's hands coming into contact with the shaft of the needle.

When withdrawing the needle, the bare fingers must not be used to press down at the insertion site when the needle is withdrawn. A Q-tip or cotton ball should be used for the protection of both the practitioner and the patient.

Physiotherapist use of proper treatment technique, include:

- preparation of patient, ensuring cleanliness of the acupuncture points
- thorough cleansing of the practitioner's hands
- proper positioning of the patient
- aseptic needle handling technique
- correct point location
- proper direction and depth of needle insertion
- protection of moxa burns
- appropriate electrical stimulation
- obtain signed consent from the patient