



Prince Edward Island  
College of Physiotherapy

## STANDARDS OF PRACTICE

PRACTICE STANDARD TITLE:

Tracheal Suctioning

DATE CREATED: October 2020

DATE APPROVED: November 1, 2020

DATE REVISED:

CATEGORY: Reserved Activities

AUTHORITY: Regulated Health Professions Act

**Definition:** Tracheal suctioning is the mechanical aspiration of excess secretions from a patient to maintain a patent airway and promote oxygenation and ventilation. To perform tracheal suctioning, a catheter is inserted through a nasopharyngeal or an oropharyngeal airway, or an endotracheal or tracheostomy tube into the trachea and the application of a negative pressure is administered as the catheter is being withdrawn.

**Standard:** Suctioning including oral, endotracheal, tracheal and nasopharyngeal is a reserved activity (putting an instrument beyond the larynx) under the Regulated Health Professions Act. Those members who wish to perform tracheal suctioning beyond the larynx are expected to work within the competencies (knowledge, skills and abilities) for which they have been educated and trained.

Physiotherapists who perform tracheal suctioning shall:

- Advise clients of the benefits and risks associated with suctioning and obtain informed consent in accordance to the *Core Standards of Practice for Physiotherapists in Canada*.
- Comply with *Practice Standards for Infection Prevention and Control*.
- Not delegate tracheal suctioning to another person who does not have legal authority to perform the act.