



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Registration

I was previously registered in NS and I am returning to practice in NS again, what should I do?

If you are reregistering after already having resigned a previously existing license in Nova Scotia you must forward proof of your malpractice insurance, a letter of Good Standing from your previous jurisdiction (if applicable), a current CV and a completed Initial Registration Form. To be eligible for registration in Nova Scotia you must have a minimum of 1200 practice hours in the previous five years, practicing or not. (The five year total does not apply if you are a new graduate or have less than five years post graduation).

I am a physiotherapist who completed my physiotherapy education outside of Canada, what must I do to be registered in Nova Scotia?

In order for you to obtain a license in Nova Scotia you must begin with the Canadian Alliance of Physiotherapy Regulators: <http://www.alliancept.org>

Your first step is credentialing, in which the Alliance satisfies the regulators (us) that your academic training meets those of Canadian educated students. Once Credentialing is completed and assuming your English equivalency is satisfactory (The Alliance will check this as well) then like a Canadian student you must write the first part (QE) of a two part national exam called the Physiotherapy Competency Exam (PCE). Once you have passed your QE then the Nova Scotia College of Physiotherapists offers a "Practicing-Sponsored license. For more details refer to the Registration Guide available on our website.

I am a physiotherapist who has not previously registered in Canada, but has completed the QE portion of the national exam. What do I need to do to register in Nova Scotia?

Applicants not previously registered in Canada, and who have passed the QE portion (Part 1) of the Physiotherapy Competency Exam (PCE), but have not yet undertaken Part 2, may apply for a "Practicing Sponsored" license to practice in Nova Scotia. (This registration classification requires the applicant to have a licensed physiotherapist, who has been practicing a minimum of two years, as a Sponsor). This license is for a limited period to allow the member to practice in Nova Scotia until the next sitting (Part 2) of the PNE. (i.e. The applicant must be registered for the next available sitting and there is a limit of 12 months or two attempts, whichever come first.) For more details refer to the Registration Guide available on our website.

Renewal

I am only working a portion of the registration year. How should I manage my annual registration renewal?

The College has a three-month registration option available at any time throughout the year for a cost of 50% of the current year's fee. You can select any start date and will be registered for the next three months. If you are registered for three months and need to extend the time period, the fee is an additional 50% of the current year plus \$25.00.

Please Note: In the event you register after August 1st, a three month registration would be sufficient to carry you to or beyond Nov. 1st at which time you can renew your license for the following year. If you register after November 1st, you may pay the full annual registration amount for the next year and your license will carry over from the current date to the next year. (I.e. if you register on Nov. 5th of the current year and pay the full registration fee for the next year, your license will commence on Nov 5 of this year and carry over until Dec. 31 of the next year.)

If I have only worked/practiced four of the previous five years must I still have a five year total of 200 CE hours and 1200 practice hours at the time of renewal?

If you were registered in any category for each of the previous five years (i.e. as non-practicing, or practicing), then you must meet the five year total, whether you accumulated practice hours each year or not. If you were resigned for one of those years and re-registered to return to practice then in fact your five years starts at the time of your re-entry to practice.

Practice Hours (reported annually)

What kind of activities can count towards practice hours?

Physiotherapy practice includes employment or other activities resulting from the possession of physiotherapy credentials and experience. Practice Hours include worked hours that are paid and professional activity hours. Worked Hours include hours of practice in clinical setting(s), consultation, research, administration and academia. It is not necessary to have the job title of Physiotherapist/Physical Therapist. You cannot claim hours related to vacation, sick leave, statutory holidays, leaves of absence and special leaves.

Professional Activity Hours (Other Hours) include hours of volunteer activity which require the use of physiotherapy theory and knowledge, and/or participation in the physiotherapy professional/regulatory organizations (NSCP, NSPA, CPA, Alliance). No more than 30 professional activity hours may be counted toward total practice hours each year.

Continuing Education is part of the Quality Practice Program and these hours are not to be included in your practice hours.

How many practice hours do I need to renew my license?

Practicing registrants are required to have 1200 practice hours within the previous five calendar years in order to renew their registration, unless you have completed the PCE or just registered with the College in the last five years. For instance, for the 2013 registration year the College will review your reported practice hours from January 1, 2008 through December 31, 2012 to ensure you have 1200 practice hours. Registrants who do not meet the above practice hour requirement for 2013 will not be able to renew and will need to contact the College.

Continuing Education Hours (reported annually)

Which activities count?

Continuing education includes: Taking post-graduate courses; Attending in-services, courses, seminars and

conferences; Undertaking research and presenting research results; Providing one to one mentorship of a peer or internationally educated physiotherapist (Max 60 hr/yr); Preceptor of a student (count only direct time spent and a max 60 hr/yr); Engaging in independent study; Teaching or presenting physiotherapy related topics to colleagues, or to the public etc.; Reading journals and research papers (Remember to record names, dates and titles of articles). The CE Record Form is available on our website.

Continuing education hours are accumulated for continuing education that relates to your area of practice or current interest. Continuing education hours must be accumulated to a minimum of 200 hours over the previous consecutive five year period. Continuing education may include both formal and informal activities. If you are a recent graduate, your five year history will relate to five years post graduation year. Continuing Education is part of the Quality Practice Program and these hours are not to be included in your practice hours.

Resigning from the College

I do not wish to renew my registration, what should I do?

In order to resign your registration you must indicate the desire to resign in writing. This can be done through mail, email or fax using the Resign From Practice form (found on our website), being sure to fill in the Practice hours and CE Hours for the past year (or current year if you are resigning after the annual license renewal). Please indicate one of the following as the reason that you are resigning your registration:

- Retirement
- Maternity Leave
- On a Leave of Absence (LOA)
- Change in Professions
- Have left the province, but remain in Canada
- Have left Canada
- Other

Supervision

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A PT/ REHAB ASSISTANT AND A PT/REHAB AIDE?

The Nova Scotia College of Physiotherapists has a brochure Support Personnel – A Guide for Physiotherapists (<http://www.nsphysio.com/resources/Support+Personnel+a+Guide+for+Physios.pdf>) that outlines the titles and education backgrounds for each of these. The Aides are typically job and location specific and should not be transferred from location to location without being retrained. The NSCP no longer offers an Aide training program.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A PT ASSISTANT AND A REHAB ASSISTANT?

The main difference between the two is that the Rehab Assistant has additional training in Occupational Therapy as well as sometimes Therapeutic Recreation training and is frequently utilized by other professions. The Physiotherapy Assistant has physiotherapy specific training. Physiotherapists are required to determine the competence of the assistant prior to delegating any task to them.

Does the supervising physiotherapist, need to be on site (i.e. somewhere in the building) in order to be readily available for consultation with the assistive personnel or can the assistive personnel being supervised work independently without a physiotherapist on site?

The supervision needed is determined by the physiotherapist, using the criteria included in the Supervision and Assignment of task Practice Standard document. In actual fact if the physiotherapist has determined the individual is competent to perform the task under indirect supervision, they could be off site and available for consultation. (The exception to this is the Sponsored Practice situation)

If I assign a task to an assistive personnel, having determined their competency and observed them doing the task, am I responsible if they overstep the delegation or fail to perform competently?

No, if you have taken the required steps before assigning the task, and have documented appropriately, you are not responsible for any actions you have not assigned or observed.

Can I use a student or untrained member of the public as a Physiotherapist assistant?

No, you may use them as support personnel, but they may not be called Physiotherapist assistants. That is a title protected role and individuals who use that title must have a college diploma/certificate from a recognized post-secondary program that includes a minimum of three terms full time equivalent study of which:

- One term's equivalent must be in physiotherapy-specific coursework (e.g., use of ambulatory aids, electrotherapy modality instruction, the principles of therapeutic exercise) that includes classroom and laboratory work; and
- One term's equivalent in physiotherapist-supervised training/fieldwork; and
- One term's equivalent of generic, program related coursework (e.g., anatomy, physiology)

Sponsor/Mentor and Practicing Sponsored

As a Sponsoring Physiotherapist, am I able to leave my Sponsored Physiotherapist alone in the clinic and just check in and monitor them a couple of times a week as long as I am available to them?

No, as a Sponsoring Physiotherapist you must not leave the Sponsored Physiotherapist alone in the clinic. The sponsor arrangement is not the same as supervision. A sponsor signs on as a peer mentor to a physiotherapist in order for that physiotherapist to meet "Practicing Sponsored" registration requirements. As per the agreement, the sponsor must be working at the same location and be available onsite for the first 30 days. They may then make written application to the Board to vary the onsite requirement. (Refer to the Guidelines for Sponsoring Physiotherapists)

Practice

Can I, as a practicing physiotherapist, put certification letters such as CST, RMT etc. after my name on business cards etc.?

No, the only letters that can follow your name are the professional designation PT. Academic qualifications and Board approved certifications are to be written on the line below your name. (Refer to the Use of Title document)

Do I have to give the client a copy of their chart upon request?

The chart is yours, but the information in the chart belongs to the client. If the client requests a copy of the chart, they are entitled to it; you may charge them a fee for copying the chart and for retrieval if necessary. The client is also allowed to view and read their own chart but should have someone present with them during the time they are viewing the chart. (Refer to Administrative Fees Guideline)

Do I need to notify the College if I am going on a LOA from work?

Yes, you must notify the College office of any extended leave even if you are planning to maintain a practicing license. It is important that we know where to reach you when we receive queries for information.

What do I need to know when I set up a clinic?

In setting up your clinical practice there will be legal, financial/accounting, insurance and other business issues that you will need to address. You need to be aware of the Occupational Safety and Health requirements such as WHMIS, First Aid, safety equipment, etc. You need to meet electrical code and fire code requirements as well as. You should arrange for professional assistance in those areas. For professional practice standards you will need to review the Physiotherapy Act and legislation with regard to professional standards, professional incorporation, etc. You do need to meet the Professional Practice Standards for NSCP. (CPA also has some good information on setting up a clinic)

I am part of a collaborative practice team and we all chart on the same pages and forms. Must I do my own assessment and have a separate physiotherapy section in the notes?

No, you do not need to re-assess a client if another professional team member has documented the assessment and you agree with the findings. You must however clearly indicate in your progress notes that you have reviewed the assessment and note and add any additional comments or clinical findings you may have based on your interaction with the client. You do not need your own section in the chart. Typically the goals and treatment plan are client centred and agreed upon by the team as a whole and documented. Your specifics would be in your progress notes.

WHAT TO DO IN CHALLENGING SITUATIONS?

In some situations a physiotherapist¹ may decide to discharge a patient from active treatment when, despite repeated reasonable attempts to manage the challenging situation over a reasonable period of time, the situation has not changed sufficiently and the physiotherapist has deemed that the patient will not be able to achieve the desired physiotherapy outcomes. Or when there is an immediate risk of harm to the physiotherapist or other individuals. If a physiotherapist discharges a patient from active care, they must do so in accordance with their professional and regulatory obligations, code of ethics and any other applicable rules or regulations.

The physiotherapist must first identify, discuss and attempt to resolve the issue. A physiotherapist should terminate the therapeutic relationship if they are unable to maintain objectivity in their interaction with the client. When discontinuing the services the physiotherapist should always suggest other options or offer transfer of care to another physiotherapist.

A physiotherapist cannot refuse care to any client on the grounds of race, religion, ethnic or national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, and social or health status.

¹ *Physical therapist, physiotherapist, physical therapy, physiotherapy, physiothérapie, physiothérapeute, PT and pht are official marks used with permission.*