

USE OF PHONOPHORESIS and IONTOPHORESIS

Preamble

The Nova Scotia College of Physiotherapists regulates the practice of physiotherapy¹ in Nova Scotia through the administration of the *Physiotherapy Act* and regulations. The Nova Scotia College of Physiotherapists considers the independent use of any prescribed substance by a physiotherapist to be in direct contravention of the *Physiotherapy Act*.

Definitions

For the purposes of this Practice Standard:

- (a) **Phonophoresis** is defined as the use of therapeutic ultrasonic energy to enhance transdermal diffusion of medications such as corticosteroids suspended in a coupling agent into the subcutaneous tissues.²
- (b) **Iontophoresis** is defined as the use of direct current to induce the transcutaneous movement of ions of a medication into the subcutaneous tissues.

Clinical Application

Physiotherapists practicing phonophoresis / iontophoresis must adhere to the following criteria:

- (a) The patient must obtain from a physician a prescription for the particular phonophoretic or iontophoretic agent before it can be used by the physiotherapist in treatment.
- (b) The phonophoretic/iontophoretic agent(s) should be clearly marked as to what they are, stored *separately, and disposed of appropriately when no longer necessary for use.*

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REPLACES: August 1997

¹ The terms *physical therapist, physiotherapist, physiotherapy, physiotherapy, physiothérapie, physiothérapeute, PT and pht* are official marks used with permission. The terms *physical therapist and physical therapy* are synonyms for *physiotherapist and physiotherapy* respectively.

² Adapted from: Michlovitz, Bellew & Nolan: *Modalities For Therapeutic Intervention*, 5th ed. FA Davis, 2012.