

# Advertising Standard

Date Approved: September 21, 2016

Updated: December 17, 2018

Effective Date: February 1, 2019

## **1. Responsibility**

Physiotherapists are responsible for any advertisement over which they have control.

Physiotherapists must review the advertisements placed by others on their behalf to ensure that they meet the expectations in the Advertising Standard. If they do not, physiotherapists must take reasonable steps to correct the advertisements.

Physiotherapists must document the steps taken.

## **2. Truth in Advertising**

Advertisements must be true, accurate, and verifiable. This means that the physiotherapist must be able to prove that the information in the advertisement is true.

Advertisements must not mislead.

Advertisements must be easy for consumers to understand.

## **3. Advertising Content**

Advertisements must only contain information about services for conditions that the physiotherapist is competent to diagnose and to treat.

Advertisements must not state or imply a guarantee of treatment results.

## **4. Claims of Superiority**

Advertisements must not state or imply that a physiotherapist's services are better than those offered by other physiotherapists.

Advertisements must not state or imply that a certain brand or product is better than others.

## **5. Advertising about Prices**

If an advertisement offers discounted prices for packaged or bundled services, it must clearly state that there is still the option to buy one service at a time. It must also make it clear that there is an option to receive a refund for unused services.

## Glossary

### ***Advertisement:***

An advertisement is any message in a public medium or in a public space promoting physiotherapy services and/or related products.

### ***Mislead:***

Leaving out important information or including information that is irrelevant or distracting.

### ***Treatment:***

To determine whether the activity performed by the physiotherapist assistant was treatment, ask yourself if the activity was part of the physiotherapist's treatment plan, for example applying modalities, exercises, gait training, etc. Things such as tidying the treatment area, removing an ice pack or escorting patients to and from the treatment area would likely not be classified as treatment.

### ***True, accurate, and verifiable:***

Whatever you say in your advertisement must have some independent proof to verify it. Ask yourself how you could prove to the College that the statement in the advertisement were true. Different kinds of advertising claims will require different kinds of proof.

For example, a claim about clinical outcomes might require the same kinds and level of proof that you would see in a peer-reviewed journal. Other types of statements, such as saying "parking is free for patients" would simply require that the claim be true and could be double checked by the College if necessary.

### ***Understand:***

By being clearly laid out and written in language that is easy for the average person to understand

### ***Reasonable steps***

Reasonable steps might include emailing or calling the person who placed the advertisement and informing that person of your professional obligation to the College. You should ask for the content of the advertisement to be changed. This entire process should be documented.