

Practice Advisory: Electrical Therapies

Reason for Practice Advisory

Massage therapy practitioners may not be aware that completing training and submitting a certificate of completion to the NHPC is required to incorporate electrical therapy into your practice.

Once training is completed, the certificate of completion must be submitted to the NHPC so it can be added to your membership profile and included in your professional liability insurance coverage.

Without a certificate on file, you **will not** be covered by professional liability insurance if a client is injured or harmed as a result of an electrical therapy treatment.

Overview of Electrical Therapies

Electrical therapies are modalities that administer thermal, mechanical, electrical, or light energy for physiological and therapeutic benefits. They are used as an adjunct to other massage therapy treatments. The electrical therapies recognized by the NHPC within the scope of massage therapy include:

- Extracorporeal Shockwave Therapy (ESWT)
 - Focused Shockwave Therapy (FSWT)
 - Radial Shockwave Therapy (RSWT)
- Frequency Specific Microcurrent (FSM) (low energy protocol only)
- Interferential Current (IFC) Therapy
- Low Level/Intensity Laser Therapy (LLLT)
 - Cold
 - Infrared
 - Red Light Therapy (RLT)
- Pulsed Shortwave Therapy (PSWT)
 - Pulsed High Frequency
- TENS (Transcutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulation)
- Therapeutic Ultrasound
- BEMER (Bio-Electro-Magnetic-Energy-Regulation)
- Pulsed Electromagnetic Field (PEMF) Therapy
- Deep Oscillation Therapy
- Sauna Blanket
- PEMF Mat

- MPS Scar Release Therapy using Dolphin Neurostim device that delivers low-level electrical currents

Potential Risks of Electrical Therapies

Risks vary depending on the specific therapy but may include:

- skin irritation or burns from improper application of energy-based devices
- worsening of pre-existing conditions due to inappropriate use or failure to observe contraindications
- electrical shock or injury from faulty equipment
- infections due to improper cleaning of equipment or electrodes
- adverse reactions if contraindications (i.e., pacemakers, pregnancy, malignancy, sensory impairment, open wounds, or tumors) are not identified

Training Requirements

To perform electrical therapies safely and competently, practitioners must complete training specific to the therapy and submit a certificate of completion to the NHPC. Training may be provided by machine manufacturers, or a continuing education provider (in-person or online). Unlike other NHPC-recognized modalities, electrical therapy courses are not pre-approved, but are considered additional techniques within the scope of massage therapy.

Introductory instruction in electrical therapies as part of a massage therapy program is not sufficient to qualify as adequate training.

Practitioners must ensure that a course or training covers the following minimum components:

- understanding how the therapy works (i.e., tissue warming, circulation effects), its therapeutic benefits, and limitations
- knowing when the therapy is appropriate and when it should not be used (i.e., on areas with sensory impairment, open wounds, or over tumors)
- hands-on instruction with the device, including manufacturer instructions, safety precautions, and proper setup (i.e., timing, distance, and intensity settings)
- procedures for cleaning and disinfection of the device between clients to avoid cross-contamination
- monitoring skin during use, avoiding burns or overexposure, and maintaining proper documentation in client records

Submit proof of training to memberservices@nhpcanada.org to have the therapy added to your profile and covered under your professional liability insurance.

Frequently Asked Questions

How can I check which modalities are included in my membership profile?

Log in to your member account on the NHPC website. On the member dashboard, look for the “Membership and Insurance Confirmation Letter” (PDF). This letter lists the modalities you are recognized to practise and covered for under NHPC’s professional liability insurance program.

Is there an additional cost to add liability insurance coverage for electrical therapies?

No, if you have a certificate of completion for an electrical therapy on file, it will be added to your professional liability coverage at no additional cost.

I received instruction on electrical therapies during my massage therapy training. Does this qualify?

No, you must complete specific training for the electrical therapy you wish to practise and submit a certificate of completion to the NHPC.

What should I do if I want to practise an electrical therapy not listed in this advisory?

Contact the NHPC at memberservices@nhpcanada.org to confirm whether the therapy is covered under your professional liability insurance and to submit proof of training.