

Animal Rehabilitation

Purpose:

The *Veterinary Medical Act* of Manitoba is the legislation governing the practice of veterinary medicine. This legislation provides veterinarians with exclusive scope of practice on animals with a few exceptions. Other professionals such as animal technicians, who are granted the ability to practice on animals by a veterinarian, must do so under the supervision of a veterinarian.

Physiotherapists, because of their education and knowledge about modalities etc. are being asked to provide services to animals by the public and some veterinarians. There is an increasing number of programs being offered which educate physiotherapists and others on animal care.

Policy:

The College of Physiotherapists of Manitoba receives its authority to protect the public through *The Physiotherapists Act* and the College is responsible to the Minister of Health. Therefore, the Council is of the opinion that the College's authority extends only to the treatment of human patients. Additionally, since the *Veterinary Medical Act* essentially grants exclusive scope of practice on animals to veterinarians, veterinarians decide to whom supervised activities may be delegated. The Council is of the opinion that the College of Physiotherapists of Manitoba has no jurisdiction over physiotherapists (or others) who treat animals.

Therefore physiotherapists who choose to treat animals under the supervision of a veterinarian are responsible to the veterinarian. The supervising veterinarian is responsible for ensuring the competence of the physiotherapy practitioner and for any activities that he/she delegates to the physiotherapist.

The Council of CPM has determined that physiotherapists who treat animals should not call their practice "physiotherapy", but instead may use words such as "animal rehabilitation". Also, the person should refrain from calling himself or herself a "physiotherapist" as this may be misleading to the public.

As the treatment of animals is not considered within the jurisdiction of the College of Physiotherapists of Manitoba, animal practice hours will not be allowed in the required practice hours of registrants. Complaints from the public involving registrants who have worked under the supervision of a veterinarian in the treatment of an animal will not be handled by CPM. These complaints will be deferred to the Manitoba Veterinary Medical Association.