

Scope, Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics:

Scope of Practice:

Since Bowen Therapists are not legally regulated in any provincial jurisdiction in Canada, no formal scope of practice exists. What follows is a general description of the scope of practice of an average Bowen Therapist.

The scope of practice of Bowen Therapy is the application of a sequence of bodywork moves to aid in the reduction of pain and inflammation in the body, realignment of the skeletal system, and alleviation of physiological dysfunction.

“Bowen Therapy” involves the gentle movement of skin, fascia, muscles, nerves, ligaments and tendons of the human body utilizing the practitioner’s hands, fingers, thumbs, and elbows. No machines or needles are utilized. There is no forceful manipulation of the spine or skeletal structure. Limited natural remedies and nutritional adjuncts may be utilized to reduce inflammation, relax muscles and promote healing. The recommendation of exercises to aid in the healing process is also included in the scope of a Bowen Therapist.

Standards of Practice:

The Standards of Practice are intended to be generic and have been developed to describe the outcomes of the various tasks the therapist is required to perform within the Scope of Practice. The Standards of Practice describe how well a therapist is expected to perform. How to do each task will be determined by the curriculum developed by the various educational programs.

These Standards will serve as a reference tool for:

- The therapists to better understand their job requirements
- Educators to address as objectives in curriculum design
- Complaints investigation
- Discipline hearings
- Fitness to Practice
- Quality Assurance
- Client relations
- The public, by providing objective standards by which to assess the quality of treatment.

1. Confidentiality

Bowen Therapists are advised that giving personal information about a client to any person without the client’s consent is considered to be professional misconduct.

2. Consent

A Bowen Therapist who proposes a treatment for a client shall obtain written consent from the client prior to administering that treatment. If the client is less than 16 years of age, written consent must be obtained from the parent or legal guardian. This consent may be withdrawn at any time.

3. Medical Records:

Consent must be obtained to collect and store personal health information and shall be kept in a secure location that cannot be accessed by others to steal, modify, copy or destroy. Records must be kept for 10 years from the date of the clients last visit. Personal health information must never be shared with others unless express written consent is provided by the client.

Records must include:

- the completed client health history
- record of client's consent to treatment
- records of on-going treatment
 - date of treatment
 - results from assessment techniques used by the therapist eg alignment or ROM issues, pain levels
 - any contraindications
 - summary of techniques used
 - areas treated
 - observations, client reactions to treatment
- any recommendations for post treatment care eg exercises, dietary changes, etc
- authorization to contact other health care professionals, when contact is required
- copies of reports pertaining to the client received from other health care professionals.

4.Public Health Standards:

The practitioner must ensure that he/she washes his/her hands thoroughly with soap and water or an alcohol based solution before touching any skin surface on the client. A clean, safe and professional environment and equipment must be provided for the client's treatment.

5.Client Communication:

Bowen Therapists agree to:

- provide the client with an opportunity to ask questions.
- explain to the client the reasons for the loosening or removal of any clothing.
- provide the client an opportunity to dress/ undress out of the view of the therapist and other people.
- get permission from the client to re-enter the area.
- inform the client of where you might touch him/her and why
- ensure all efforts are made to maintain respectful privacy of the client by use of coverings.
- explain to the client appropriate self-care including its intended effect and possible negative reactions.
- demonstrate any recommended exercise(s).
- witness that the client understands the self-care and/or exercise correctly.

6. Competence

Therapists must not attempt to treat beyond their level of training and should refer to another practitioner or doctor as required. All training certificates should be clearly displayed at the practitioner's place of practice.

7.Advertising

All advertising should be respectful and befitting the health profession. No claims of superiority over other practitioners should be made. No claims of a cure or reference to diagnostic tests or diagnoses should be made.

Code of Professional Ethics:

The code of professional ethics for Bowen Therapy outlines general ethical boundaries and expectations to be upheld by all Bowen Therapists:

- To act in the best interests of a patient
- To provide treatment within the Scope of Practice
- To provide treatment while adhering to the Standards of Practice
- To refrain from sexual misconduct
- To comply with all current and future federal, provincial and municipal laws and regulations pertaining to business and the practice of Bowen Therapy
- To refrain from practicing if impaired
- To report colleagues if a colleague is committing an act of professional misconduct
- To refrain from guaranteeing a cure
- To avoid conflict of interest
- To speak respectfully of other Bowen Therapists and other practitioners/doctors and acknowledge differences in styles of practice or training in a constructive way.
- To treat all clients with respect
- To practice with integrity, honesty and diligence