

Reserved Activities in Physiotherapy

PERFORMING SPINAL AND JOINT MANIPULATIONS PROVIDED A TRAINING CERTIFICATE HAS BEEN ISSUED TO THE MEMBER BY THE OPPQ PURSUANT TO A REGULATION UNDER PARAGRAPH O) OF SECTION 94¹

This reserved activity allows physiotherapists with the appropriate certificate from OPPQ to manipulate joints in the upper and lower limbs and spine.² Manipulation is a treatment technique that applies a high velocity low amplitude thrust at the limit of the treated joint's articular amplitude.

This technique can be used to relieve pain and increase the range of movement of peripheral or spinal joints. In physiotherapy, manipulation should not be the only treatment. It should be part of a treatment plan and is generally in addition to other methods such as manual therapy techniques or exercises.

Manipulation is included in manual therapy techniques, such as mobilization, soft tissue techniques, and neuromeningeal mobilization, for example. **It is important to distinguish between manipulation and mobilization.** Joint mobilization also involves movements applied to the peripheral or spinal joints, but they are within the patient's physiological articular amplitude, whereas manipulation goes beyond the available physiological articular amplitude. The reserved activity relating to manipulation does not prevent physiotherapists and physical rehabilitation therapists without the certificate from practicing other manual therapy techniques such as mobilization.

PLEASE NOTE!

The *Code of Ethics of Physiotherapists and Physical Rehabilitation Therapists* stipulates that the patient's written consent must be obtained before performing cervical manipulation.³

AUTHORIZED MEMBERS

Physiotherapists

CERTIFICATION

A training certificate issued by OPPQ is required to practice this reserved activity. There are two types of certificate: a certificate for joint manipulation and a certificate for spinal and joint manipulation. For more information, please refer to the administrative guide.⁴

COMPLEMENTARY

This activity can also involve other activities reserved for physiotherapists, such as introducing a finger beyond the anal margin to manipulate the coccyx.⁵

SHARED

This activity is not reserved exclusively to physiotherapists. It is shared with physicians and chiropractors, in accordance with the aims described in their respective scopes of practice.

¹ Section 37.1, Subsection 3 i) of the *Professional Code*.

² The *Professional Code* uses the terms "spinal and joint manipulation" in the wording describing the reserved activity. In practice, the term "joint manipulation" refers to peripheral joint manipulation.

³ Section 17, Subsection 2 of the *Code of Ethics of Physical Therapists and Physical Rehabilitation Therapists*.

⁴ *Guide administratif du Règlement sur des activités de formation des physiothérapeutes pour procéder à des manipulations vertébrales et articulaires* (2014), available on the OPPQ website.

⁵ Section 37.1, Subsection 3 of the *Professional Code*.