# **Evidence-Informed Practice Standard**

Effective Date: November 1, 2024  
Date Approved: September 23, 2024

**Standard**

The physiotherapist engages in **evidence-informed practice** in physiotherapy service delivery.

**Expected outcome**

Patients can expect that the physiotherapy services they receive are informed by the best available, credible evidence, the personal knowledge, training, and experience of the physiotherapist, and the patient’s perspective.

**Performance expectations**

The physiotherapist:

* **Critically appraises** evidence relevant to the practice setting, population served, and available assessment and treatment options before integrating evidence into practice.
* Incorporates critically appraised physiotherapy-related evidence into assessment and treatment plans.
* Integrates critical thinking and professional judgment into patient-centered care, evaluating their practice in terms of patient outcomes, and modifying approaches based on this self-reflective process.
* Does not promote information, treatment options, or products that are not grounded in scientific and physiologically plausible evidence.

Regarding the use of **emerging** or **complementary therapies**, the physiotherapist:

* Before incorporating new or emerging therapies into the physiotherapy services they provide, is aware of:
  + Related legislative and regulatory considerations.
  + The relevant advancements and changes within the physiotherapy profession, specifically relating to evidence-informed practices and standards of care.
  + The training, knowledge, skills and judgement necessary to enable the new or emerging practice.
* Clearly communicates with patients and **others** when the services proposed are emerging or complementary therapies.
* Obtains the patient’s informed consent for emerging or complementary services by, including but not limited to, advising the patient of the current evidence supporting the proposed service and the potential implications, including funding implications, and the physiotherapist’s training relevant to the services offered.
* Offers evidence-informed, **best practice** physiotherapy approaches before offering emerging treatments.

**Definitions**

**Best practice** in physiotherapy refers to the most effective approaches to patient care, based on established procedures and interventions that consistently demonstrate positive outcomes and are based on scientific evidence, expert consensus, or clinical experience.

Best practice sets the “gold standard” for physiotherapy care and is supported by evidence-informed practices and approaches.

**Complementary therapies** refer to non-conventional practices used in conjunction with **conventional physiotherapy**.

**Conventional physiotherapy** involves standard practices for assessing, diagnosing, and treating illnesses or injuries that are widely accepted and practiced within mainstream physiotherapy.

**Critically appraised** means information that has gone through the process of carefully and systematically examining research to judge its trustworthiness, and its value and relevance in a particular context.

**Emerging therapies** refers to treatments developed within mainstream physiotherapy with support from clinical research but currently lacking in rigorous evidence to support their use.

**Evidence-informed practice** is derived from evidence-based practice and involves clinical problem solving and decision making informed by integrating best available evidence, patient context and the personal knowledge and experience of the physiotherapist.

**Others** includes caregivers, family members, and other members of the healthcare team, as indicated and appropriate.