



POSITION STATEMENT

THE USE OF X (FORMERLY TWITTER)

Background

The Registered Massage Therapists' Association of Ontario (RMTAO) regularly evaluates the platforms used for professional communication to ensure they align with the ethical standards of the profession and the safety of our members and the public.

X (formerly Twitter) is a popular online social media platform. There is increasing evidence that changes to the policies associated with the platform have resulted in increased hate speech and inauthentic (“bot”) activities. The RMTAO has become aware of increasing concerns regarding artificial intelligence’s (AI) renderings of inappropriate images on the platform. X’s AI image generator has been used to develop non-consensual, sexually explicit imagery. This imagery has been identified specifically in professional and official organizational accounts.

The use of X and of these images brings concerns to the RMTAO, including, but not limited to:

- The development of deepfake sexual imagery as a form of technology-facilitated gender-based violence, causing documented psychological, professional, and reputational harm.
- Development and circulation of AI-generated content without clear informed consent.
- Inadequate safeguards related to data protection, identity misuse, and image rights.
- An avenue of harm and misuse of personal information for healthcare professionals.

Additionally, the RMTAO is concerned regarding X’s inconsistent response to harassment, misinformation, disinformation, and other harms affecting marginalized communities. The RMTAO believes that X’s governance and operational practices also raise concerns regarding transparency and accountability.

As regulated health professionals, Registered Massage Therapists (RMTs) are guided by the College of Massage Therapists of Ontario’s (CMTO) Standards of Practice, including those addressing professional boundaries and the prevention of sexual abuse. RMTs are further governed by the CMTO’s Code of Ethics, Principle 4: Be Responsible and Accountable, which emphasizes the collective responsibility to maintain public trust and confidence, as well as the responsible use of social media. The RMTAO believes that our professional digital environment should reflect these same standards.

Position

It is the position of the RMTAO Board that X (formerly Twitter) should not be used as a professional digital platform by RMTs, or any organizations that represent RMTs.

Summary

The RMTAO stopped actively using X in February 2025, and the Association does not plan to return to using it in the future, as it no longer aligns with the values of massage therapy. The Association will continue to maintain an account on X to ensure that ownership of the account will remain with the organization to protect brand integrity and prevent unauthorized or inappropriate use. Informed consent, safety, and transparent communication are key components to massage therapy in Ontario. As such, the RMTAO will not participate in digital environments that normalize exploitation, harassment, or non-consensual use of personal information. The RMTAO encourages RMTs and organizations representing RMTs to consider ceasing the use of X for professional accounts.

References

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- College of Massage Therapists of Ontario. (2022). *Standard of practice: Prevention of sexual abuse*. <https://www.cmtto.com/rules/standard-of-practice-prevention-of-sexual-abuse/>
- Hickey, D., Fessler, D. M. T., Lerman, K., & Burghardt, K. (2025). X under Musk's leadership: Substantial hate and no reduction in inauthentic activity. *PLOS ONE*, 20(2), e0313293. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0313293>
- Massage Therapy Act*, 1991, S.O. 1991, c. 27. Ontario Legislature. <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/91m27>
- Regulated Health Professions Act*, 1991, S.O. 1991, c. 18. Ontario Legislature. <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/91r18>

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