



Registered Massage Therapists'
Association of Ontario

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November 24, 2020

Dr. David Williams
Chief Medical Officer of Health
Public Health
21st Flr, 393 University Ave,
Toronto, ON M5G 2M2

Dear Dr. Williams:

Yesterday morning, on CBC Radio, you stated that massage therapy was not allowed in the locked down areas of Ontario. This has caused a great deal of confusion with the public and in the massage therapy profession. It would help if you would publically correct this statement in the media. As a regulated health profession, Registered Massage Therapists provide essential services to their patients, and it needs to be made clear to the public that all regulated health professions can continue to provide services in all health units. The College of Massage Therapists of Ontario has provided strict guidelines that ensure safety and that protect the public.

The Registered Massage Therapists' Association of Ontario (RMTAO) is appreciative of the many initiatives of your Office to mitigate the devastating impact of the COVID-19 crisis. Registered Massage Therapist are one of 26 Regulated Health Professions in Ontario. From that perspective, we are the same as physicians, dentists, nurses and all the other regulated health professions, and we appreciate that we are currently being treated as such by continuing to be permitted to provide necessary healthcare services.

The RMTAO advocates for 14,000 Registered Massage Therapists (RMTs) across Ontario. We have over 6,000 members. As regulated health professionals, our members want to do their part to support Ontarians during the pandemic by providing essential care necessary to their health and welfare.

RMTs play a vital role in providing health services to Ontarians. They assist with rehabilitation, and alleviate the physical symptoms of depression, stress and anxiety. RMTs help people relieve their musculoskeletal pain so they can remain at work longer, continue to enjoy the activities that they love and in some cases avoid further medical care from doctors or hospitals. Massage therapy has also been recognized as a potential non-drug alternative to opioids in the treatment of chronic pain.

Massage therapists are able to treat both chronic and acute injuries and conditions, including offering post-surgical support and support to people managing potentially debilitating symptoms of chronic conditions.

We are concerned about the long-term effects of social isolation and prolonged stress on Ontarians. We feel that RMTs have an important role to play in providing relief to the physical symptoms associated with stress, anxiety and depression. Studies have indicated that massage therapy can be beneficial to reduce stress, promote mental health, and improve the quality of their working lives, which is incredibly important during these times.

The RMTAO is asking that a statement be issued in the media and a message be circulated to all Public Health Officials in Ontario to reinforce that Massage Therapy is a regulated health profession providing essential services to Ontarians in a safe and responsible manner.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Feraday", is centered within a light gray rectangular background.

Michael Feraday
Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer
Registered Massage Therapists' Association of Ontario

CC: The Honourable Doug Ford, MPP
Hon. Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health and Long-Term Care
Robin Martin, Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care
Andrea Horwath, Leader, Official Opposition
Steven Del Duca, Leader, Ontario Liberal Party
Mike Schreiner, Leader, Green Party of Ontario
Helen Angus, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Health
Office of the Mayor, the City of Toronto
Office of the Mayor, City of Brampton