



## Ethical issues in Physiotherapy

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The following discussion questions are provided as an additional educational tool to accompany this fireside chat video. Please feel free to select the questions that are most relevant to your committee or group, revise and adapt them as needed, etc. As always, we welcome feedback on this or any other NSHEN resource.

### Questions:

- In your opinion, what are some of the biggest challenges associated with having to allocate limited resources (including time) between patients when each of them could benefit from extra treatment resources?
- How might institutional policies help the individual physiotherapist facing these challenges?
- Should resource allocation be done at the bedside or at system level?
- A physiotherapist may act as the patient's advocate to the team in risky situations about patient discharge. Can you think of other situations where physiotherapists' insights may prompt them to become the patient's advocate to the health care team?
- Discuss the role of hope in patient care. How would you balance hope with the obligation to be truthful?
  - In a situation where the patient and health care team do not have the same expectations around health outcomes?
  - In a situation where the patient does not appear to be fully engaged in their care?
- In your opinion, what does it take to build a good therapeutic relationship with a patient?

### Resources

Canadian Physiotherapy Association: CPA Code of Ethics. <https://physiotherapy.ca/cpa-code-ethics>

College of Physiotherapy of Ontario. 2009. Managing Challenging Inter-personal Situations When Providing Patient Care. Guide to standards of Professional Practice.

<https://scpt.in1touch.org/document/3646/ontarioguidetomanagingchallenginginterpersonalrelationships.pdf>

Edwards, I., C. M. Delany, A. F. Townsend, L. Lee Swisher. 2011 New Perspectives on the Theory of Justice: Implications for Physical Therapy Ethics and Clinical Practice, *Physical Therapy*. Volume 91, Issue 11, 1 November 2011; 1642-1652. <https://academic.oup.com/ptj/article/91/11/1642/2735107>  
Nova Scotia College of Physiotherapists. Code of Ethics and Rules of Conduct.  
[https://nsphysio.com/resources/Physio\\_Code\\_of\\_Ethics.pdf](https://nsphysio.com/resources/Physio_Code_of_Ethics.pdf)

Physiotherapy Alberta, College + Association. 2016. Managing Challenging Situations Resource Guide for Alberta Physiotherapists  
[https://www.physiotherapyalberta.ca/files/guide\\_managing\\_challenging\\_situations.pdf](https://www.physiotherapyalberta.ca/files/guide_managing_challenging_situations.pdf)

Richardson, Robert W. 2015. Ethical issues in physical therapy. *Curr. Rev. Musculoskelet Med.* 2015, Jun 8(2): 118-121 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4596180/>

Stokes, E., J. Kruger, K. Harwood, J. Warren, Z. Dantile. 2015. Advocacy in physical therapy: strategies for individuals and organisations. *Physiotherapy*; May 2015, Vol 101, Supplement 1, pages e1-e2.  
[https://www.physiotherapyjournal.com/article/S0031-9406\(15\)00038-3/abstract](https://www.physiotherapyjournal.com/article/S0031-9406(15)00038-3/abstract)

Soundy, A., Liles, C., Stubbs, B., Roskell, C. 2014. Identifying a Framework for Hope in Order to Establish the Importance of Generalised Hopes for Individuals Who Have Suffered a Stroke. *Advances in Medicine*, 2014, June 29 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4590961/>

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