

Policy Title:	Requesting General Radiography Studies by Physiotherapists	
Applies To:	Physiotherapists and Diagnostic Imaging Staff	
Approved:	Effective:	Next Review:
March 14, 2022	April 19, 2022	March 14, 2026
Sponsor:	Senior Medical Director, Diagnostic and Therapeutic Services Director, Clinical Networks	
Approval Authority:	VP Operations, Eastern Zone	
Number: DT-DI-020	Manual: Diagnostic Testing	

PURPOSE

Requesting general radiography studies is within the physiotherapist’s scope of practice. This policy provides the conditions under which the physiotherapist working at Nova Scotia Health can request specific general radiography studies.

POLICY STATEMENTS

- The physiotherapist must complete the following competency requirements annually:
 - Review of this policy
 - An [LMS](#) education session titled Requesting General Radiography Studies: Guidance for Physiotherapists
 - A competency quiz
- The physiotherapist working in the following areas may request general radiography studies as per [Appendix B](#) .
 - Ambulatory Care
 - Community
 - Inpatient
 - Exception:** When the **inpatient’s** Most Responsible Health Care Practitioner (MRHCP) is available, the physiotherapist is responsible to contact them for general radiography studies request.

3. Physiotherapy Leadership must ensure Information Management Information Technology (IMIT) has a current list of physiotherapists who can request general radiography studies as per [Appendix C](#).

PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

1. Requesting general radiography studies allows for:
 - Increased efficiency in the progression and/or continuation of the physiotherapy assessment or treatment.
 - Efficiency in triaging patients within the Orthopedic Assessment Clinic (OAC).

PROCEDURE

1. The **physiotherapist** is responsible to:
 - 1.1. Ensure the general radiography study has not been performed within the past year anywhere within Nova Scotia Health by confirming on Picture Archiving and Communication System (PACS) or SHARE portal.
 - 1.2. Complete and sign a radiology requisition and include the following information:
 - General radiography studies required
 - Relevant clinical background
 - Name and fax number for the Authorized Prescriber/MRHCP for review and follow-up.
 - Phone number/pager number of the requesting physiotherapist in case a critical result needs to be communicated.
 - 1.3. Provide the patient with the requisition and instructions on ambulatory booking process.
2. **DI staff** is responsible to send the general radiography studies report to:
 - The referring physiotherapist via fax
 - The MRHCP via fax or electronic transfer
3. The **physiotherapist** is responsible to communicate general radiography study findings (that are within their scope of practice) to the patient.
 - For findings that require follow-up by the MRHCP, the physiotherapist contacts the MRHCP via telephone to ensure they received the report and to confirm follow-up.
4. If the patient does not have an MRHCP, the physiotherapist is responsible to direct the patient as follows:
 - 4.1. For a **non-critical result** that requires medical follow up, direct the patient to go to a walk-in clinic.
 - Include a note indicating the concern and referencing the general radiography studies report.

4.2. For a **critical result**, direct the patient to an emergency department.

- Include a note indicating the concern and referencing the general radiography studies report (as per Critical and Discrepant Results Reporting Guideline).

5. **Physiotherapy Leadership** is responsible to provide and maintain a current list of eligible physiotherapists within their programs to IMIT annually or as staffing changes as per [Appendix C](#).

REFERENCES

Nova Scotia College of Physiotherapists. (2016). *Client assessment, diagnosis and intervention*. (Practice Standard 2).

https://nsphysio.com/images/standards/Client_Assessment_Standard.pdf

Nova Scotia College of Physiotherapists. (2016). *Collaborative practice*. (Practice Standard 4).

https://nsphysio.com/images/standards/Collaborative_Practice_Standard.pdf

Nova Scotia College of Physiotherapists. (2016). *Competence*. (Practice Standard 6).

https://nsphysio.com/images/standards/Competence_Standard.pdf

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Appendices

Appendix A: Definitions

Appendix B: General Radiography Study Views within Physiotherapist Scope to Request

Appendix C: Process for Maintaining Current Physiotherapist Lists for Diagnostic Imaging

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Appendix A: Definitions

Authorized Prescriber	<p>A health care professional permitted by legislation, their regulatory college, Nova Scotia Health, and practice setting (where applicable) to prescribe medications and treatments or to request diagnostic testing. The authority to engage in these activities is not linked to any particular health profession and may also differ within that health care profession depending upon specific competencies and skills.</p> <p>Examples of an authorized prescriber may include, but are not limited to, a physician, medical resident, nurse practitioner, or physiotherapist approved to request a general radiography study.</p>
Most Responsible Health Care Practitioner (MRHCP)	<p>The physician, clinical associate, or nurse practitioner who has responsibility for directing and coordinating the care and management of an individual patient at a specific point in time.</p>
Physiotherapy Leadership	<p>Includes zone directors or delegates who have physiotherapists reporting to them.</p>

Appendix B: General Radiography Study Views within Physiotherapist Scope to Request

Body Part	Routine Images
Finger	AP/PA, Lateral
Hand	AP/PA, Oblique, Lateral
Wrist	AP/PA, Oblique, Lateral
Forearm	AP and Lateral
Elbow	AP and Lateral
Humerus	AP and Lateral
Shoulder	AP, Y view and axial
Acromioclavicular joint	AP with and without weights
Clavicle	AP and Axial
Scapula	AP and Y View
Toes	AP/PA, Oblique, Lateral
Foot	AP/PA, Oblique, Lateral
Calcaneus	Axial and lateral
Ankle	AP/PA, Oblique, Lateral
Tibia/Fibula	AP and Lateral
Knee	AP (both knees) and Lateral affected Skyline needs to be specifically requested as clinically relevant For suspected knee OA, weight-bearing required
Femur	AP and Lateral
Hip	AP (both hips) and Lateral affected
Pelvis	AP
Cervical spine	AP, Odontoid, Lateral, both obliques if part of standard routine
Thoracic spine	AP, Lateral and Swimmer's view
Lumbar spine	AP, Lateral, L5S1
Sacrum	AP and Lateral
Coccyx	Lateral
Sacroiliac joint	AP and both obliques
Chest for rib views	PA and Oblique

Appendix C: Process for Maintaining Updated Physiotherapist Lists for DI

1. Once the physiotherapist successfully attains a passing grade, the Physiotherapy Leadership/delegate confirms the physiotherapist's contact information:
 - Computer sign in name
 - Mailing address
 - Fax number
 - Email address
2. The Physiotherapy Leadership/delegate provides this information on their list of physiotherapists who can request general radiography studies.
3. This list is reviewed/updated at least once a year.
 - This includes removing the names of physiotherapists who no longer work in the ambulatory care, community-based or inpatient settings or updating any changes in the contact information (e.g., name, work location).
4. The Physiotherapy Leadership/delegate sends the current copy to IMIT.
5. IMIT is responsible for updating the current list within Nova Scotia Health Informatics System(s).

DISTRICT HEALTH AUTHORITY POLICIES BEING REPLACED

CDHA RH 03-025 Consultation for X-ray by Physiotherapists

AVDHA 225.005 Radiography Requests by Physiotherapists

CHA 218.016 Radiography Requests by Physiotherapists

VERSION HISTORY

Version:	Effective:	Approved by:	What's changed:
Original	2022-04-19	VP Operations, Eastern Zone	N/A
	2022-05-25	Clarification	Clarified Purpose statement to include the physiotherapist "working at Nova Scotia Health"
	2023-10-06	Clarification	Clarified exception in policy #2