

Scope of practice is an important legal and ethical principle that Massage Therapists must observe at all times.

Massage Therapists perform specific assessments on their clients but they do not diagnose. Thus, if a client presents with symptoms that are not identifiable of a musculo-skeletal origin, you must refer them to a primary health care practitioner for appropriate care and diagnosis.

Writing letters of referral not only enhances client care but also helps establish professional credibility within the medical community.

Some common symptoms warranting referral

- Not responding to treatment/no progress
- Worsening after treatment
- Excessive fatigue
- Persistent/chronic headaches
- Tremors
- Obesity
- Sudden or unexpected changes in health
- Untreated depression
- Sudden loss of appetite/unexplained weight loss
- Extreme pain
- Anything alarming

Massage Therapists can refer clients directly to:

- General Practitioners
- Sports Medicine Practitioners
- Chiropractors
- Osteopaths
- Physiotherapists
- Naturopaths
- Podiatrists
- Counsellor/Psychologists
- Dentists/Dieticians

We cannot refer directly to medical specialists.

6 October 2012

Dr Who
Family Practice
12 Wellness Drive
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Dr Who

Purpose of letter: referring a client/presenting problem

I am writing to refer Sarah Winter for assessment of resting head and hand tremors.

Client details/background

Sarah is a fit, active 54 year old with no previous history of neurological symptoms. Onset of the tremors is approximately one month ago.

Treatment Summary

I have been treating Sarah on a monthly basis for the last two years, mainly for shoulder pain and restriction, and stress management.

Reason for Referring

I have suspended further treatment until Sarah has undergone a full medical assessment.

Yours sincerely,



Samuel Clemens