



COLLEGE OF  
PHYSICAL  
THERAPISTS  
OF ALBERTA

# position statement

## ANIMAL REHABILITATION

### INTRODUCTION

The College of Physical Therapists of Alberta (CPTA) is the regulatory body responsible for regulating physical therapists<sup>1</sup> in Alberta which includes licensing members to practice, handling complaint matters and determining practice and ethical standards. The CPTA administers the *Physical Therapy Profession Act* in order to protect the public interest in relation to the delivery of physical therapy services by physical therapists in Alberta.

### BACKGROUND

The *Physical Therapy Profession Act* defines physical therapy as the application of physical therapy knowledge, skills and abilities in the context of human health care, specifically the assessment and treatment of the human body. Use of the title 'physical therapist' or 'PT' is limited to those individuals who are members of the CPTA and therefore practice physical therapy.

The *Veterinary Profession Act* exclusively governs the delivery of animal health care by veterinarians. The *Veterinary Profession Act* defines the scope of practice respecting animal health care and restricts the practice of veterinary medicine to veterinarians, and within a limited scope to animal health technologists. Animal health care is regulated in Alberta by the Alberta Veterinary Medical Association.

### POSITION

It is the position of the CPTA that animal rehabilitation is outside the defined scope of practice of physical therapists in Alberta and therefore not within the mandate of the *Physical Therapy Profession Act* or the CPTA.

As the provision of health care to animals is outside the scope of practice of physical therapists in Alberta, members of the CPTA should note:

- the use of the protected titles granted to physical therapists under the *Physical Therapy Profession Act* is prohibited when delivering animal rehabilitation; and
- the time spent in the provision of animal rehabilitation does not qualify towards the CPTA's practice hour requirement for permit renewal.

Members of the CPTA who wish to provide rehabilitation to animals should:

- recognize that animal health care activities including rehabilitation are within the protected scope of practice of veterinarians; and
- ensure that the provision of animal rehabilitation is in accordance with the rules and standards of the Alberta Veterinary Medical Association.

In keeping with this position, the CPTA will work cooperatively with the Alberta Veterinary Medical Association on complaints received about members that may be related to issues including inappropriate title use or other violations or behaviors unbecoming of a member of the CPTA.

[This Position Statement has been reviewed and endorsed by the Alberta Veterinary Medical Association.]

RELEASE DATE  
April 2007

<sup>1</sup> Physical therapist, physiotherapist, physical therapy, physiotherapy, physiothérapeute, physiothérapie, PT and pht are official marks used with permission. The terms physical therapist and physical therapy are synonyms for physiotherapist and physiotherapy respectively.