

Office of the
fairness
commissioner

Bureau du
commissaire à
l'équité



Study of Registration Practices of the

**COLLEGE OF MASSAGE THERAPISTS OF
ONTARIO, 2007**

This study was prepared by the Office of the Fairness Commissioner (OFC). We encourage its citation and distribution for non-commercial purposes, provided full credit is given. Please contact the OFC for permission to reproduce this study for commercial purposes.

© **Queen's Printer for Ontario, 2008**

ISBN 978-1-4249-6457-4 (PDF)

Disponible en français

Office of the Fairness Commissioner

595 Bay Street, Suite 1201

Toronto ON M7A 2B4

Canada

416 325-9380 or 1 877 727-5365

ofc@ontario.ca

www.fairnesscommissioner.ca

The Office of the Fairness Commissioner is an arm's-length agency of the Ontario government, established under the Fair Access to Regulated Professions Act, 2006. Its mandate is to ensure that certain regulated professions have registration practices that are transparent, objective, impartial and fair.

CONTENTS

1. Introduction.....	3
2. Background of the Regulatory Body.....	3
A. Legislation.....	3
B. Protected Titles	3
C. Definition of the Profession	4
D. Labour Market/Economic Trends.....	4
E. New Developments Within the Profession.....	4
F. Staffing	5
3. Registration Practices	6
A. Registration Requirements and Application Process.....	6
B. Documentation Required from Internationally Trained Individuals	9
C. Credential Assessment (Third Party and/or Internal)	10
D. Academic/Program Requirements	12
E. Work Experience Requirements	13
F. Examinations	13
G. Language Requirements.....	14
H. Fees.....	15
I. Third Parties	16
J. Typical Length of the Registration Process.....	17
K. Accredited Programs	17
L. Internal Review/Appeal Process.....	19
4. Bridging Programs.....	19
5. Mutual Recognition Agreements.....	20

6. Applicants' Interactions with Regulatory Body	21
A. Nature and Frequency of Communication	21
B. Backlogs	21
C. Complaints Regarding the Registration Process	21
7. Changes Since the 2005 Survey	21
8. Registration Information and Statistics	23
9. Sources	28

1. INTRODUCTION

The Office of the Fairness Commissioner (OFC) undertook a study of registration practices of Ontario’s regulated professions during the fall and winter of 2007–2008. The purpose of the study was to understand each regulated profession’s 2007 registration practices and to establish baseline data and information to enable the OFC to measure progress as it fulfills its mandate under the Fair Access to Regulated Professions Act, 2006.

This report reflects the registration practices of the Ontario College of Massage Therapists as of December 31, 2007. Information in this report was gathered from:

- face-to-face meetings with registration staff of the regulatory body
- additional documentation provided by the regulatory body
- relevant websites
- career maps for the profession posted on the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration’s website (where applicable).

The Ontario College of Massage Therapists also provided registration information and statistics for 2005, 2006 and 2007 through a standard spreadsheet designed by the OFC.

An analysis and summary of the findings for all of the regulated professions is contained in the OFC’s *Ontario’s Regulated Professions: Report on the 2007 Study of Registration Practices*.

2. BACKGROUND OF THE REGULATORY BODY

A. Legislation

The College of Massage Therapists of Ontario (CMTO) regulates the practice of massage therapy in the public interest under the Regulated Health Professions Act (RHPA) and the Massage Therapy Act, 1991. The registration regulation is Ontario Regulation 864/93.

B. Protected Titles

“Massage therapist,” “registered massage therapist (RMT),” and variations or abbreviations or equivalents in other languages are protected titles and can only be used by individuals who have fulfilled the CMTO’s educational and registration requirements and have passed the CMTO’s Certification Examination.

C. Definition of the Profession

According to the Massage Therapy Act, the practice of massage therapy is the assessment of the soft tissue and joints of the body and the treatment and prevention of physical dysfunction and pain of the soft tissue and joints by manipulation, in order to develop, maintain, rehabilitate or augment physical function or relieve pain. Massage therapy has been regulated in Ontario since 1919. In Canada, it is a regulated profession only in British Columbia, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Ontario.

D. Labour Market/Economic Trends

Massage therapy is a growing profession, as more people choose to use preventive approaches to health care and to complement traditional types of medical treatments with alternatives. The demand for massage therapists is expected to increase with the growth of the elderly population and the increased awareness of the existence of this health care profession and its health benefits. The number of massage therapy schools and available positions is increasing.

Some massage therapists work in hospitals or on sports teams. Many work in private practice or in group clinics. Hours of work vary depending on the requirements of the workplace. Earnings also depend on the workplace and the skill and experience of the massage therapist. Earnings can vary widely. Many massage therapists work in a “blended environment” where they work in a variety of places on a given day.

E. New Developments Within the Profession

i. Professional Designation

At the December 2006 meeting of the council for the CMTO, the council adopted a position statement that all members should use the designation “RMT” and that “MT” should no longer be used. The council also approved a motion for the CMTO to begin to amend the registration regulation to specify the use of “RMT” as the only acceptable designation for the protected title of “massage therapist.”

ii. Size of the Council for the CMTO

Due to the increasing difficulty in meeting its statutory obligations to hold hearings, the council is proposing to increase the number of professional seats to 7–9 (from the current 6), and the number of public seats to 7–8 (from the current 5), for a maximum of 17 seats.

iii. Expiry of Certificates of Registration

The Massage Therapy Act does not include a regulation allowing for the expiry of certificates or the resignation/retirement of members. According to a strict interpretation of the registration regulation,

the only way to leave membership in the CMTO is via suspension and then revocation of the certificate. The Registration Committee presented an amendment to the registration regulation to council that would allow members to resign and would allow for the expiry of a certificate of registration. Council passed a motion to accept the proposed “Expiration of Certificates of Registration and Retirement Regulation Amendment.”

iv. Language Proficiency Test

The Registration Committee decided in 2007 that the Canadian Language Benchmark Placement Test (CLB) will be the language proficiency test used to prove reasonable language fluency. No other language tests will be accepted.

v. Health System Improvements Act

The Health System Improvements Act, 2007 (Bill 171), which is intended to make the health care system more responsive to the needs of the public by strengthening and supporting health professionals and the various programs and services that make up our health care system, received royal assent in June 2007. Once proclaimed, the act will require the CMTO to expand its public Register to include additional information to help the public make informed choices. (The public Register is a chronological record of everyone admitted to the profession.) The entire public portion of the Register must then be available on the CMTO website, which has major technical and financial implications for the CMTO.

F. Staffing

The CMTO staff consists of 15 full-time employees and one part-time employee. Three of the full-time employees are dedicated to registration, and two other staff members are involved with examinations.

3. REGISTRATION PRACTICES

A. Registration Requirements and Application Process

i. Basic Requirements for Registration

An applicant who did not graduate from a massage therapy program in Ontario must complete all of the following to be eligible for registration with the CMTO:

- Apply for evaluation of credentials
- Have their school(s) send a transcript of their program to the CMTO
- Complete any additional education required to provide equivalent competencies to the massage therapy programs in Ontario
- Complete the standards and regulations course
- Pass an English or French language assessment, if necessary.

Note: Applicants from a non-Ontario school that teaches the Ontario curriculum (see 3.k.ii) must complete only the first two of the above five requirements.

In addition, all applicants (including those graduating from Ontario programs) must:

- Pass the Certification Examination
- Provide the following:
 - photocopied proof of professional liability insurance (minimum amount: \$2,000,000 per occurrence)
 - one professional ID-type photograph (3 cm x 3 cm)
 - photocopy of any one of the following: Canadian citizenship card, birth certificate (if born in Canada), Canadian passport, social insurance number card, permanent resident card or an IMM1000 issued by Immigration Canada
 - photocopy of valid CPR certificate (Heartsaver level or higher) and First Aid certificate (Emergency level or higher)
- Complete an application for registration form, and pay the required fees.

For Ontario graduates, the CMTO will verify that they graduated from an approved massage therapy program in Ontario within the past three years. They do not have to pay the application fee for evaluation of credentials.

ii. Steps in the Application Process: Ontario Graduates or Their Equivalent

The following application steps apply to graduates from Ontario massage therapy programs and from massage therapy programs outside Ontario that teach the Ontario curriculum.

Step 1 – Evaluation of Credentials by the CMTO

Ontario graduates: The CMTO checks the graduate lists sent to it from Ontario programs, and verifies that the applicants are on the list.

Graduates from equivalent programs: Applicants who graduated from institutions outside Ontario that teach the Ontario curriculum must have two forms completed to apply for evaluation by the CMTO: the Application for Credential Evaluation, and the Transcript Request Form.

- *Application for Credential Evaluation:* Applicants must apply for evaluation of their credentials and pay the \$175 application fee. This form is available on the Downloads section of the CMTO website.
- *Transcript Request Form:* Applicants must send this form to the educational institution where they obtained their massage therapy training. The institution must complete the form and send it together with the applicant's transcripts and detailed course descriptions directly to the CMTO.

Step 2 – Certification Examination

After CMTO has received the forms and evaluated their credentials, applicants apply to take the Certification Examination, pay the relevant fees and take the exam.

Step 3 – Registration with the CMTO

Once applicants have passed the examination, the CMTO will send them an application for registration and information about the documentation required regarding their Canadian citizenship status and liability insurance. If an applicant has not yet received permanent work authorization when he or she meets all other requirements, the applicant should contact the CMTO to discuss ways to resolve this issue. Applicants must then apply for registration, and pay the relevant registration fees.

iii. Steps in the Application Process: Graduates from All Other Schools

The following application steps apply to all applicants who graduated from any school outside of Ontario that does not teach the Ontario curriculum, including internationally trained individuals.

Before applicants come to Ontario, they should write to the CMTO for an application to become a massage therapist in Ontario or download an application from the CMTO's website.

The CMTO suggests that applicants begin the application process in their home country or province, because they must contact the educational institution where they obtained their massage therapy training and ask the institution to send information directly to the CMTO.

Step 1 – Evaluation of Credentials by the CMTO

Applicants must have two forms completed to apply for evaluation by the CMTO: the Application for Credential and Prior Learning Assessment (CPLA) and the Transcript Request Form.

- *Application for Credential and Prior Learning Assessment:* Applicants must apply for evaluation of their credentials and pay the \$175 application fee. This form is available on the Massage Therapists Educated Outside of Ontario section of the CMTO website.
- *Transcript Request Form:* Applicants must send this form to the educational institution where they obtained their massage therapy training. The institution must complete the form and send it together with the applicant’s transcripts and detailed course descriptions directly to the CMTO.

The Registration Committee reviews the documents and determines whether the applicant has successfully completed a course of study in massage therapy that provides equivalent competencies to those taught in the massage therapy programs in Ontario.

Only original documents or certified copies will be accepted. If the institution sends the CMTO documents that are not in English or French, the applicant must get the documents translated and certified at his or her expense and send them back to the CMTO.

If the applicant’s original training was in a language other than French or English, the applicant must take a fluency test in order to demonstrate “reasonable fluency.” If the scores are not adequate, the Registration Committee may recommend language training. (Note: There are two different English language requirements. To enter the bridging program [which is currently available only in English], if that is required, the CMTO recommends that the applicant achieve scores on the Canadian Language Benchmark Placement Test of 7 on reading, speaking and listening and 6 on writing. However, scores of 8 will be required for actual registration.)

There are two possible outcomes of the credentialing process:

1. If the applicant’s competencies are assessed as “equivalent” to those provided in the approved Ontario massage therapy programs, the applicant must complete the Standards and Regulations e-Workshop and is then eligible to take the Certification Examination.

2. If the course is assessed “not equivalent,” the applicant cannot take the Certification Examination. The Registration Committee will inform the applicant of the additional requirements that must be completed in order to become eligible to take the Certification Examination. The Registration Committee may direct the applicant to do one of the following:
 - Complete the Standards and Regulations e-Workshop
 - Complete a bridging program (for mild to moderate upgrades)
 - Apply to an approved Ontario massage therapy diploma program for advanced standing (for significant upgrades).

Step 2 – Additional Study and Ontario Standards of Practice and Regulations e-Workshop

Applicants complete all additional training or experience specified in the evaluation processes.

Applicants must also complete CMTO’s online course on the standards of practice and the regulations and legislation in Ontario (the Standards and Regulations e-Workshop). (For those applicants who are directed to complete a bridging program or apply to an approved Ontario massage therapy diploma program for advance standing, the standards and regulations course is built in.)

Step 3 – Certification Examination

After completing all other requirements, applicants apply to take the Certification Examination, pay the relevant fees and take the exam.

Step 4 – Registration with the CMTO

Once applicants have met the requirements in steps 1 to 3, the CMTO will send them an application for registration and information about the documentation required regarding their Canadian citizenship status and liability insurance. If an applicant has not yet received permanent work authorization when he or she meets all other requirements, the applicant should contact the CMTO to discuss ways to resolve this issue. Applicants must then apply for registration, and pay the relevant registration fees.

B. Documentation Required from Internationally Trained Individuals

i. Standard Documentation

Internationally trained individuals must submit transcripts from an approved massage therapy program. These transcripts must be sent directly by the institution to the CMTO. Applicants must also submit proof of the ability to work in Canada and an Application for Credential and Prior Learning Assessment.

ii. Options for Applicants with Unavailable/Destroyed Documents

Individuals who do not have direct access to transcripts that describe their education may submit a statutory declaration in which they swear that the information they are providing is true. On request, the CMTO will provide applicants with a document describing how to complete a statutory declaration.

C. Credential Assessment (Third Party and/or Internal)

All applicants who were trained outside of Ontario must have their credentials evaluated for equivalency to the Ontario curriculum. The process varies depending on whether the applicant graduated from a program outside of Ontario that teaches the Ontario curriculum or from one that does not.

Applicants from programs outside of Ontario that teach the Ontario curriculum must submit an Application for Credential Evaluation and arrange to have transcripts sent to CMTO for evaluation.

i. Credential and Prior Learning Assessment (CPLA)

All applicants whose massage therapy training is from an institution that does *not* teach the Ontario curriculum, including all international applicants, participate in the Credential and Prior Learning Assessment (CPLA). The CPLA is conducted by the CMTO, with a portion, the diagnostic assessment, conducted by Centennial College. Once the applicant is ready for the diagnostic assessment, the CMTO sends the applicant's information to Centennial College, which manages and documents the assessment, and reports the results to the CMTO. Currently, the CPLA is available in English only.

The CPLA process consists of the following three steps:

- 1. Credential Assessment:** Applicants must submit an Application for Credential and Prior Learning Assessment. They must also arrange to have their transcripts sent to the CMTO.
- 2. English Language Assessment:** Once credentials have been approved, applicants are informed whether they must take an English language assessment. (All applicants whose native language is not English must take the free Canadian Language Benchmark test at the CMTO. If they do not achieve satisfactory scores, they must pay to take the test again.)

3. **Diagnostic Assessment:** The diagnostic assessment is a written and practical evaluation of individuals' knowledge, hands-on, critical thinking, and clinical application skills. This diagnostic assessment is conducted by examiners from the Centre for Applied Research and Health Technology and Education in Toronto at Centennial College. It consists of three components:
 - *Health Studies Written Examination* — Applicants participate in a computer-mediated multiple-choice exam focused on health studies. This examination includes topics such as anatomy, physiology, pathology, neuroanatomy and physiology, and kinesiology.
 - *Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE)* — Applicants participate in one three-hour examination consisting of 20 seven-minute stations (including two rest stations). Stations include skills such as health history taking, assessment, application of techniques, palpitation or structure identification, prescription of remedial exercise and application of hydrotherapy.
 - *Comprehensive Clinical Evaluation* — Applicants participate in one two-hour clinical placement (at Centennial College's Student Clinic) under the supervision of a registered massage therapist. The supervisor evaluates the applicant's ability to administer a comprehensive massage therapy treatment to a new client.

Once an applicant has completed the diagnostic assessment, a comprehensive report is created from the results. This report is reviewed by the CMTO's Registration Committee, which sends an overview of the assessment results with a decision letter notifying the applicant of any additional study to be completed before he or she is eligible to take the CMTO's Certification Examination.

Note:

For applicants who do not live in an area of the province where they can participate in the CMTO's diagnostic assessment and the bridging program, the CMTO's evaluator will evaluate the competencies in their program and submit a report to the CMTO. A copy of the report will be sent to the applicant to determine whether he or she wishes to provide any additional information. Applicants will also be asked to provide detailed information about their massage therapy practice since completing their program.

The Registration Committee reviews the application, the evaluator's report, the applicant's response to the report and the information concerning employment. Then the Registration Committee again determines if the applicant has successfully completed a course of study in massage therapy and if the course and practice since graduation provide equivalent competencies to those taught in the massage therapy programs in Ontario. If not, the applicant may require additional study.

ii. All Applicants

All applicants are asked the following when they first apply to the CMTO:

- If the applicant is a Canadian citizen, permanent resident or the holder of a Canadian Work Permit.
- If the applicant can speak and write French or English with reasonable fluency.¹
- If the applicant has any reason to believe that he or she would not be eligible to acquire professional liability insurance.
- If the applicant has been convicted of a criminal offence related to the regulation of the profession. Applicants who have been found guilty of such an offence will be asked to provide details.
- For details about any current proceedings for professional misconduct, incompetence or incapacity in Ontario or in another jurisdiction in relation to the applicant's practice of massage therapy or another health profession.
- For any information regarding previous attempts for certification as a massage therapist in Ontario or another jurisdiction.
- If the applicant has made an attempt to pass a licensing examination in Ontario or another jurisdiction that has not yet resulted in a passing grade.

D. Academic/Program Requirements

All applicants must have graduated from an approved massage therapy program in Ontario or have a massage therapist diploma from outside of Ontario that the CMTO believes to be equivalent to one from an approved massage therapy program in Ontario.

Any applicants who completed their education program (regardless of where they took the program) more than three years before the date they applied to the CMTO must complete a refresher course approved by the CMTO, or must provide evidence of at least 500 hours of practice during the previous three years. Applicants required to complete a refresher course must complete the registration process within 15 months of completing the course.

¹ Applicants from programs that teach the Ontario curriculum are not asked about French or English fluency.

Currently, no educational institutions in Ontario offer refresher programs in massage therapy, so any refresher training the applicant requires must be obtained through tutors approved by the CMTO. A list of approved tutors is available in the Downloads section of the CMTO's website.

Therapists trained outside Ontario (except those trained in the four non-Ontario schools that teach the Ontario massage therapy curriculum) must complete a course on the standards of practice and the regulations and legislation that govern practice in Ontario. This course is available through the CMTO's website. The application for the course is available in the Downloads section of the website.

If the applicant is required to complete other additional study, the CMTO must receive verification from the approved tutor or the school the applicant attends that he or she has successfully completed the course of study.

E. Work Experience Requirements

The CMTO does not require work experience for registration from applicants who have completed their education program within three years before the date they apply to the CMTO.

Any applicants who completed their education program (regardless of where they took the program) more than three years before the date they applied to the CMTO must complete a refresher course approved by the CMTO, or must provide evidence of at least 500 hours of practice during the previous three years. Applicants required to complete a refresher course must complete the registration process within 15 months of completing the course.

The bridging program provides internationally trained individuals with supervised clinical experience.

F. Examinations

Applicants can take the College of Massage Therapists Certification Examination only after completing all other requirements.

All applicants, including applicants from Ontario programs, must pass the Certification Examination. Before taking the exam, they may consult the Examination section of the CMTO's website for detailed information.

Currently, no educational institutions in Ontario offer examination preparation courses in massage therapy, so any examination preparation the applicant requires must be done with an approved tutor. The CMTO can provide applicants with a list of approved tutors who can help them, or they may find the list in the Downloads section of the CMTO website.

The Certification Examination has two parts:

- 1. Written Multiple-Choice Examination.** This examination tests the applicant's theoretical knowledge of massage therapy, physiology, anatomy and other related health sciences. It also tests knowledge of laws and ethical issues necessary to practise massage therapy in Ontario. This examination is a computer-adaptive examination that takes about two hours to complete. It is offered at various sites throughout the province. This examination may be taken at any time.
- 2. Practical Clinical Examination.** This examination requires the applicant to demonstrate his or her massage therapy skills in a clinical setting. Applicants will encounter scenarios at stations. Each station has a simulated client with a different case history and a different task set to be completed. Applicants will have a short time to review the case history of the client and act accordingly. The clinical examination takes a half day. Starting in 2008, this examination will be offered at the CMTO one or two days per week from the middle of April through November. The examination procedure may vary from time to time. Specific details about the examination are provided in the Certification Examination Candidate Handbook.

Applicants will have three opportunities to take the examinations. An applicant who fails the written or practical examination may wish to have help from an approved tutor to ensure success on the next attempt. The examination feedback that applicants receive with their score will indicate if they are weak in a particular area and will help the tutor determine how best to prepare for the next attempt at the examination. Applicants who fail examinations three times must return to school and obtain a new diploma before applying to the CMTO a second time.

The Certification Examination is a standardized provincial exam used by Ontario, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Nova Scotia. Exemptions are not granted under any circumstances.

However, under a mutual recognition agreement (MRA), eligible individuals with unrestricted practice certificates in BC and Newfoundland and Labrador do not have to take the exam.

G. Language Requirements

All applicants must have reasonable fluency in English or French.

The English language assessment currently used by the CMTO in the Credential and Prior Learning Assessment (CPLA) is the Canadian Language Benchmark Placement Test. When the English Language Assessment is complete, the CMTO informs applicants of the results and advises them on possible next steps. The required scores for registration are 8 on reading, speaking, listening and writing. For some applicants, additional language training may be suggested before continuing on to the diagnostic assessment.

Note: To enter the bridging program, CMTO recommends that the applicant have scores of 7 on reading, speaking and listening and 6 on writing. This is not a requirement, so applicants can enter the bridging program with lower scores; however, the CMTO will recommend that those individuals take additional language training. Scores of 8 will still be required for registration.

If applicants require fluency tests in French, they should contact the CMTO for information about where to take the tests and the required scores.

H. Fees

i. Fees for Ontario Graduates and Equivalent

The following fees apply to graduates from Ontario schools and non-Ontario schools that teach the Ontario curriculum.

Fee	
Application for Credential Evaluation (applies to applicants from non-Ontario schools; Ontario graduates do not pay this fee)	\$175
Application for Registration	\$50
Initial Registration Fee (prorated for the number of months remaining in the year when the applicant becomes eligible to register)	\$425
Certification Examination	
Written	\$225
Clinical	\$700
Annual Registration Fee	\$425

ii. Fees for All Other Applicants

Fee	
Application for Credential and Prior Learning Assessment (CPLA)	\$175
Diagnostic assessment	\$1,300
<i>Total to be sent with application for CPLA</i>	<i>\$1,475</i>
Fluency testing (unless the applicant passes the free fluency test taken before the diagnostic assessment)	\$130
Tuition and student fees for courses (approximation)	\$3,500
Application for Registration	\$50
Initial Registration Fee (prorated for the number of months remaining in the year when the applicant becomes eligible to register)	\$425
Certification Examination	
Written	\$225
Clinical	\$700
Annual Registration Fee	\$425

Applicants must also get professional liability insurance before they can register as a massage therapist. Preferred rates for insurance are available, as part of membership benefits from the Ontario Massage Therapist Association, or the CMTO can provide the names of insurance brokers who provide liability insurance for members of the profession.

I. Third Parties

Name of Third Party	Relationship to Regulatory Body
Centre for Applied Research and Health Technology and Education, Centennial College	Administers the diagnostic assessment process (equivalency assessment) and coordinates the bridging program.
Canadian Language Benchmarks	Administers the language tests and sends the reports to the CMTO.

J. Typical Length of the Registration Process

It takes most applicants four or five months to complete the registration process. It takes CPLA/bridging-program applicants approximately 16.5 months from application to initial registration if they go through the bridging program. There is a three-year time limit to complete the registration process.

Internationally trained applicants should apply before they leave their home country or as soon as they arrive in Canada to help speed up the application process.

K. Accredited Programs

Massage therapists are not currently required to come from accredited schools. The CMTO proposed a regulation that would require applicants to attend accredited schools before registering with the CMTO. The proposal was filed with the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care approximately six years ago.

i. Ontario Schools

The following schools offer massage therapy diploma programs in Ontario.

- Algonquin College of Applied Arts & Technology, Nepean
- Canadian College of Health Science and Technology, Windsor
- Canadian College of Massage and Hydrotherapy, Kitchener, North York
- Canadian Therapeutic College, Burlington
- Centennial College of Applied Arts and Technology, Scarborough
- Collège Boréal, Sudbury
- D'Arcy Lane Institute, London
- Elegance School of Esthetics, Cornwall
- Elmcrest College of Applied Health Sciences & Spa Management, North York, Toronto
- Everest College of Business, Technology and Health Care, Barrie, Hamilton, Mississauga, Newmarket, Ottawa, Thunder Bay, Toronto (2 locations), Windsor
- Georgian College, Barrie
- ICT Kikkawa College, Toronto
- Institute of Complementary & Alternative Therapies, Toronto
- International Academy of Massage Inc., Ottawa

- Kiné-Concept Institute Ontario, Ottawa
- Lambton College, Sarnia
- Medix School, Kitchener, London, Scarborough, Toronto
- Ontario College of Health & Technology, Stoney Creek
- Protégé School, Scarborough
- Sir Sandford Fleming College, Peterborough
- Sutherland-Chan School, Toronto
- Trillium College, Kingston, Oshawa, Peterborough
- Wellsprings College of Massage Therapy and Esthetics, Richmond Hill
- Westervelt College, London

ii. Non-Ontario Schools That Teach the Ontario Curriculum

The following schools outside of Ontario teach the Ontario curriculum.

- Canadian College of Massage and Hydrotherapy (branch of CCMH in Ontario), Calgary, AB
- Canadian College of Massage and Hydrotherapy (branch of CCMH in Ontario), Halifax, NS
- CompuCollege (branch of ICT Kikkawa College), Saint John, NB
- ICT Northumberland (branch of ICT Kikkawa College), Halifax, NS

If the CMTO-proposed regulation is passed, the CMTO will require that graduates come from an accredited program. Currently, two schools teach the Ontario competencies and are accredited by the Commission on Massage Therapy Accreditation, an independent accrediting commission of massage therapy education institutions and programs worldwide:

- ICT Kikkawa College, Toronto, ON
- ICT Northumberland College, Halifax, NS.

Other schools in Ontario currently teaching the massage therapy program would need to become accredited in order to send graduates for application to the CMTO.

L. Internal Review/Appeal Process

i. Appeals to the Registration Committee

Applicants may appeal to the Registration Committee in writing, stating the reason for their appeal. The CMTO will try to arrange for a different panel to review the appeal, but this may not be possible. (The Registration Committee consists of only five people, and quorum is three. Therefore, one or more members involved in the original decision may be involved in reviewing the appeal.)

For 2007, the Registration Committee consisted of five members: two of them (including the chair of the committee) were public members of the CMTO council, two were professional members of council, and one was a professional member who was not a member of council.

Appeals of Registration Committee decisions are handled by the Health Professions Appeal and Review Board (HPARB), an independent administrative tribunal that has the authority to review decisions of colleges' registration and complaints committees upon request by the parties involved.

An applicant is entitled to a copy of the registration file. Upon request, the Registrar must give an applicant all the information and a copy of each document the CMTO has that is relevant to the application. The Registrar may refuse to give an applicant anything that may, in the Registrar's opinion, jeopardize the safety of any person.

ii. Appeals of Diagnostic Assessment Results

An Internal Appeal Committee (non-statutory committee) reviews, if necessary, the evaluations that the team at Centennial College does as a result of the diagnostic assessment. The Internal Appeal Committee members do not have any connection with the diagnostic assessment.

Applicants may appeal these evaluation results if extraordinary circumstances arise during the evaluation or within 24 to 48 hours before the evaluation. The appeal will be reviewed to determine if the applicant should be granted another opportunity to take the assessment free of charge.

Information about internal reviews and appeals are not accessible on the CMTO's website. The information is provided to an applicant (where appropriate), in a letter to the applicant.

4. BRIDGING PROGRAMS

The CMTO has developed a prior learning assessment process and a new bridging program, Bridging to Massage Therapy in Ontario, which is available for massage therapists from other provinces and countries. Information on this program can be found on the CMTO website, or applicants may

telephone the CMTO for information. Currently, the program is only available in English, at Centennial College in Toronto.

Applicants whose knowledge and skills are assessed as not equivalent to the educational standards in Ontario, and whose assessment indicates they require minimal to moderate Ontario-specific upgrading, will be referred to the bridging program. In the bridging program, students take 16–19 courses.

The bridging program provides participants with the following support:

- plain language information and support
- assessment of academic credentials and skills
- profession-specific language training
- supplementary education and training to address knowledge gaps
- supervised clinical experience in diverse Ontario health care settings
- Certification Examination preparation
- assistance to full employment.

To enter the bridging program, CMTO recommends that the applicant have scores on the Canadian Language Benchmark Placement Test of 7 on reading, speaking and listening and 6 on writing. This is not a requirement, so applicants can enter the bridging program with lower scores; however, the CMTO will recommend that those individuals take additional language training. (Note: Scores of 8 are required for final registration as a massage therapist.)

If applicants will not be residing within a reasonable distance of Centennial, the CMTO will, depending on the applicants' needs, try to work with one of the approved schools in their area to help the applicants get the additional education they need.

5. MUTUAL RECOGNITION AGREEMENTS

The CMTO has a domestic mutual recognition agreement (MRA) with the provincial regulatory organizations for massage therapy in British Columbia and Newfoundland and Labrador. The MRA establishes the conditions under which a massage therapist with an unrestricted practice certificate in one jurisdiction will be recognized and allowed to practise in the other MRA jurisdictions in Canada.

Applicants who wish to apply for registration with the CMTO under the MRA should contact the CMTO.

6. APPLICANTS' INTERACTIONS WITH REGULATORY BODY

A. Nature and Frequency of Communication

The CMTO communicates with applicants throughout the registration process. During the application process, applicants communicate by telephone, by e-mail and in person with the Registration Manager and staff regarding the process, costs, etc.

After an applicant applies, the CMTO alerts the applicant if documents are missing. Once applicants are approved for the diagnostic assessment, the CMTO does not communicate with them until the diagnostic assessment is completed. Contact is made directly with Centennial College.

After applicants complete the diagnostic assessment, the nature and frequency of communication is applicant-specific and depends on how often an individual contacts the CMTO as he or she moves through the registration process.

B. Backlogs

The CMTO has no backlogs in its registration process.

C. Complaints Regarding the Registration Process

The CMTO has not had any complaints about the registration process. However, its standard approach is to ask that the complaint be made in writing. Complaints are handled on an individual basis.

The CMTO has received one complaint recently regarding the fact that the diagnostic assessment and the bridging program are only available in Toronto.

During the past ten years, less than one per cent of complaints received at the CMTO about its practising members have involved internationally educated members.

7. CHANGES SINCE THE 2005 SURVEY

The Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration conducted a survey in 2005 to collect information about occupational regulatory bodies in Ontario.

A. Bridging Program

In 2005, the CMTO began a project to develop an International Massage Therapy Bridging Program designed to remove barriers for internationally educated massage therapists. Working with the Ontario Regulators for Access consortium and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, the CMTO collaborated with Centennial College to take a leading role in identifying several potential barriers for internationally educated massage therapists who apply for registration in Ontario.

To help address these barriers, the first bridging program for internationally trained massage therapists in Ontario began through Centennial College in September 2006. This program is not an alternative to the existing diploma programs. The bridging program is intended for internationally educated massage therapists who are assessed to have equivalent educational preparation to Ontario-educated massage therapists, but need additional socio-cultural and profession-specific language training in a Canadian health care context in order to be successful at the CMTO's registration examinations.

B. Other Developments

In 2006, the CMTO introduced its online exam application, payment and scheduling process. It also created a system enabling applicants to do their initial registration online.

In 2007, the CMTO updated its career map on the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration's website.

Bill 30, which proposed an act regulating the profession of traditional Chinese medicine, received royal assent in December, 2006, establishing the College of Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners and Acupuncturists of Ontario. It was possible that regulated professions that provide acupuncture would have to stop. However, the CMTO retained massage therapists' ability to perform acupuncture within its profession's scope of practice.

In 2008, the Objective Structured Clinical Exam (OSCE — a component of the Certification Examination) will be offered at the CMTO. It will be offered weekly beginning mid-April until the end of November.

8. REGISTRATION INFORMATION AND STATISTICS

Definitions used in these tables:

Alternative class of licence: a class of licence that enables its holder to practise with limitations; additional registration requirements must be met in order to be fully licensed. The College of Massage Therapists of Ontario does not have such a licence. The only licence available other than the General Certificate (practising) is the Inactive Certificate (non-practising). However, all applicants for registration are required by the regulations to register with a General Certificate (practising).

Applicant: a person who has applied to start the process for entry to the profession.

Applicant actively pursuing licensing: an applicant who had some contact with the College of Massage Therapists of Ontario within the year specified.

Inactive applicant: an applicant who had no contact with the College of Massage Therapists of Ontario within the year specified.

Member: a person who is currently able to use the protected title or professional designation “massage therapist” or “registered massage therapist.”

Languages in which application information materials were available

Language	2005	2006	2007
English	Yes	Yes	Yes
French	Yes	Yes	Yes
Other(s)			

Countries where internationally educated applicants were initially trained in massage therapy

Applications Received	2005	2006	2007
Largest number	United Kingdom	China	China
Second-largest number	United States	United States	United States
Third-largest number	Russian Federation	Australia	United Kingdom
Fourth-largest number	Portugal	Romania	Poland
Fifth-largest number	France		Russian Federation

Staff employed by the College of Massage Therapists of Ontario

Number of Staff	2005	2006	2007
Involved in registration process	2	3	3
Involved in appeals process ¹	2	3	3

¹ Involved in appeal of diagnostic assessment — 2005: [N/A]; 2006: 1; 2007: 1.

Jurisdiction where members were initially trained in massage therapy (before they were granted use of the protected title or professional designation in Ontario)

Members	Ontario	Other Canadian Provinces	USA	Other International	TOTAL
Total members	7,577	24	3	40	7,644
Non-practising members	1,001	6	1	6	1,014

Applicants processed by the College of Massage Therapists of Ontario in 2005

Jurisdiction where members were initially trained in massage therapy (before they were granted use of the protected title or professional designation in Ontario)					
In 2005 (Jan. 1 to Dec. 31)	Ontario	Other Canadian Provinces	USA	Other International	TOTAL
New applications received	1,006	10	3	10	1,029
Applicants actively pursuing licensing	1,006	19	5	12	1,042
Inactive applicants	0	46	20	35	101
Applicants who met all requirements and were authorized to become members but did not become members	6	0	0	0	6
Applicants who became members	764	15	0	1	780
Applicants who were authorized to receive an alternative class of licence but were not issued a licence	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Applicants who were issued an alternative class of licence	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Applicants processed by the College of Massage Therapists of Ontario in 2006

Jurisdiction where members were initially trained in massage therapy (before they were granted use of the protected title or professional designation in Ontario)						
In 2006 (Jan. 1 to Dec. 31)	Ontario	Other Canadian Provinces	USA	Other International	TOTAL	
New applications received	892	15	0	1	908	
Applicants actively pursuing licensing	892	27	6	9	934	
Inactive applicants	0	30	2	2	34	
Applicants who met all requirements and were authorized to become members but did not become members	8	3	0	0	11	
Applicants who became members	788	12	0	2	802	
Applicants who were authorized to receive an alternative class of licence but were not issued a licence	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Applicants who were issued an alternative class of licence	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	

Applicants processed by the College of Massage Therapists of Ontario in 2007

Jurisdiction where members were initially trained in massage therapy (before they were granted use of the protected title or professional designation in Ontario)					
In 2007 (Jan. 1 to Dec. 31)	Ontario	Other Canadian Provinces	USA	Other International	TOTAL
New applications received	992	30	3	12	1,037
Applicants actively pursuing licensing	992	30	3	12	1,037
Inactive applicants	0	17	4	9	30
Applicants who met all requirements and were authorized to become members but did not become members	42	1	0	0	43
Applicants who became members	764	11	2	7	784
Applicants who were authorized to receive an alternative class of licence but were not issued a licence	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Applicants who were issued an alternative class of licence	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

9. SOURCES

College of Massage Therapists of Ontario, 2006 Annual Report: Dynamic Movement.

College of Massage Therapists of Ontario, “International Massage Therapy Bridging Programme,” *The College Standard*, Vol. 14, No. 1 (Spring/Summer 2007), 6.

College of Massage Therapists of Ontario, *The College Standard*, Vol. 14, No. 2 (Autumn/Winter 2007), 6-11.

College of Massage Therapists of Ontario, “The Complaints Process” (brochure).

College of Massage Therapists of Ontario and the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration, “Access to the Massage Therapy Profession in Ontario,” Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration website.

<http://www.citizenship.gov.on.ca/english/working/career/professions/massagetherapists.shtml>. Last accessed: February 28, 2008.

College of Massage Therapists of Ontario website. <http://www.cmto.com>. Last accessed: February 28, 2008.

Commission on Massage Therapy Accreditation website. <http://www.comta.org>. Last accessed: February 13, 2008.

Representatives of the College of Massage Therapists of Ontario met with staff of the Office of the Fairness Commissioner on December 10, 2007, to provide further information for this study.

[To Contents](#)

