

SCRIPT OUTLINE

Hello, it is nice to meet you Mr./Mrs./Ms./Dr. _____. (name of candidate.)

My name is _____ and I work at _____. (info of 1st representative.)

And my name is _____ and I work at _____. (info of 2nd representative.)

We are calling on you today on behalf of the Physiotherapy Association of BC.

Both of us are physiotherapists.

At present there are over 4,000 physiotherapists in British Columbia.

Approximately half of BC's physios work in the private sector – at privately-owned clinics. The other half are employed in the public sector – and most work at a publicly-funded hospital, a residential-care facility or do community care work.

Our organization, the Physiotherapy Association of BC (PABC), represents approximately three-quarters of all physiotherapists now working in BC. The PABC's membership includes nearly all of the privately-employed physiotherapists, and about one-quarter of all public-sector physios.

The purpose of our visit with you is three-fold.

First, we would like to share with you a series of position papers the PABC prepared back in 2017. These papers acknowledge issues that still hold true for healthcare workers in BC today. You can view them on our website, [here](#).

Second, the rising number of COVID-19 cases caused the provincial government to pause private-practice physiotherapy services across the province. While this was a decision made in an effort to help protect British Columbians, it actually left many without the vital care they rely on.

Following BC's Restart Plan, physiotherapists were able to resume practising under WorkSafeBC guidelines in Phase 2. Since then, our province's hardworking physiotherapists working in private clinics have demonstrated they can provide services safely in person as they prioritize infection prevention and control measures. Physiotherapy has not been a source of community spread.

What is your stance on ensuring all physiotherapists are able to practise and assist patients during the pandemic? How will you support us in ensuring the provincial government doesn't prevent access to private-practice physiotherapy care in BC, during the pandemic?

Third, we have some questions for you about healthcare concerns in BC. The PABC position papers we mentioned earlier will help guide our conversation around these issues. There are five position papers in total; the topics discussed include:

1. **Wait Times for Orthopaedic Surgery.**

* Wait-times in BC for hip- and knee-replacement surgeries, while have improved since 2017, unfortunately, are still below the national average.

[Source](#): *Canadian Institute for Health Information.*

[Physio Can Help](#) to reduce wait times through ‘triage,’ whereby patients are assessed for either surgery or non-surgical treatment. Studies in the U.K. and Canada have proved that a significant number of GP referrals to specialists are unnecessary and costly. PT can also help with reducing the patients who need surgery by providing treatment.

2. **Seniors’ Health Care.**

* British Columbians aged 65 years and older currently compose 18.3 percent of the province’s population, and are expected to grow. [Source](#): *2016 Census.*

* As this population grows, so will their unique healthcare needs. This presents the opportunity and need to plan and implement strategies specifically for the health of BC’s seniors.

* Falls are one of the greatest risks to seniors’ health. A total of 13, 283 deaths occurred among adults aged 60 years and older in BC from 2004 to 2017, where ‘fall’ was identified as the contributing cause of death. [Source](#): *Fall-related deaths among older adults in British Columbia: cause and effect of policy change, BMJ.*

[Physio Can Help](#) by teaching seniors fall-prevention strategies, as well as providing ongoing treatment to enhance mobility, maintain strength, and prolong independence.

3. **Primary-Care in BC**

* A decade ago, in 2007, the province vowed that BC would fully implement Primary Care by 2017. While we have started to implement Primary Care Networks, there is still a need to prioritize this.

* The fact is that BC does not have a sufficient number of general practitioner physicians (GPs) to implement Primary Care.

Physio Can Help if physiotherapists are fully utilized as members of integrated Primary Health Care teams – multi-disciplinary teams – that provide front-line, first-contact care. Physiotherapists are highly trained and skilled in assessing and treating lower-back and chronic pain patients, as well as a range of musculoskeletal issues.

4. **BC's Drug-Opioid Crisis.**

* The variables of the pandemic have worsened BC's already devastating opioid crisis. A lack of access to physiotherapy and non-pharmaceutical pain management resources contributes to this crisis. [Source: CTV News.](#)

Physio Can Help because physiotherapy is an effective, low-cost – and low-risk – way to manage chronic pain, potentially eliminating or reducing the need for pain-killing opioids.

5. **Healthcare Costs.**

* BC has the second-lowest number of hospital beds per capita in the country. This is a major cause of long wait times for surgery.

* In mid-life, the average Canadian receives about \$3,000 in health services per year. By age 85, that number rises to \$25,000. We have to meet the healthcare demands of our aging population and ensure our seniors are provided with appropriate and timely health care. [Source: Times Colonist.](#)

Physio Can Help to reduce Hospital and Physician spending through 'direct referral,' whereby physiotherapists assess and treat patients with musculoskeletal issues.

[View Physio Can Help – Advocacy Resources](#)

[Encourage those running in your community to fill out this questionnaire](#)