

Personal Support Worker Scope of Practise

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What and Who Determines What A PSW May Do

- Legislation
- Employer
- Training
- Current Experience



Regulation & PSWs

Many health professionals in Ontario are regulated under *Regulated Health Professions Act*

- Defines which professions are regulated
- 26 professions in Ontario
- Establishes controlled acts
- Criteria for exemption
- Sets out requirements for each profession's regulatory college



Regulation & PSWs

Professional regulatory colleges are responsible to set

- Practice standards
- Educational requirements
- Public information
- Complaint and disciplinary procedures

Personal Support Workers are *not regulated*



Personal Support Worker

Unregulated health care worker

- not listed as a regulated profession under the *Regulated Health Professions Act*
- Does not have a regulatory “college” or governing body
- Discussions among PSW networks about self-regulation
- No provincial association for PSWs
- Personal Support Network of Ontario



PSW Role & Accountability

- The *Regulated Health Professions Act* only identifies the acts that a non-regulated health professional (such as a PSW) *cannot* do - or can only do in specific circumstances
- Under Common Law, all PSWs must act responsibly and exercise *duty of care* in all acts
- There are also the ethical obligations to avoid harm and promote good

Scope of Practise

PSWs do what a person would do for him or herself if physically and/or cognitively able that are usually not controlled acts

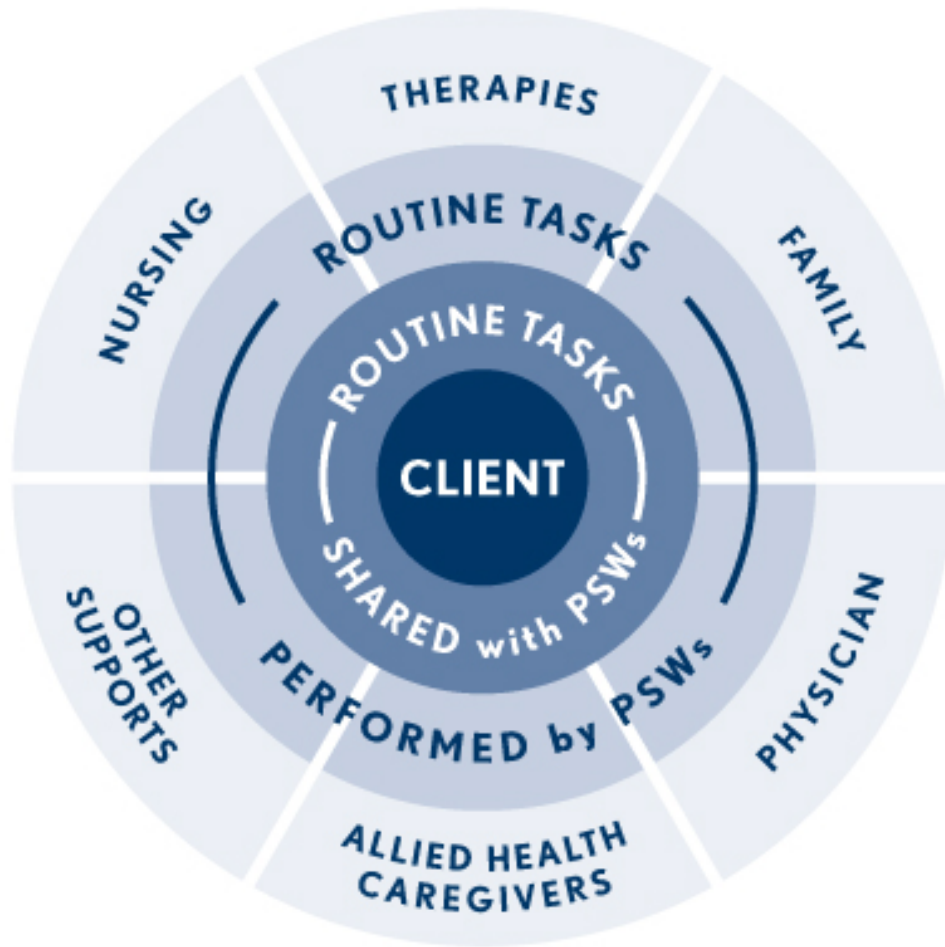


PSWs may perform controlled acts, **only if**

- routine for the person
- the employer permits, and
- a specific training procedure is followed



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What Do PSWs Do?

According to the Provincial Role Statement

- Depends upon the individual needs of each person you support
- Can include
 - Home management
 - Personal care
 - Family responsibilities (routine care giving to children)
 - Work, social and recreational activities



Home Management

Home management is a significant component of personal support



Home Management includes:

- Shopping
- House Cleaning
- Meal Preparation



Personal Care

Helping a person with

- Getting Dressed
- Personal Hygiene
 - Bathing
 - Grooming
 - Toileting
- Mobility
- Other Routine Activities of Living



Family Responsibilities

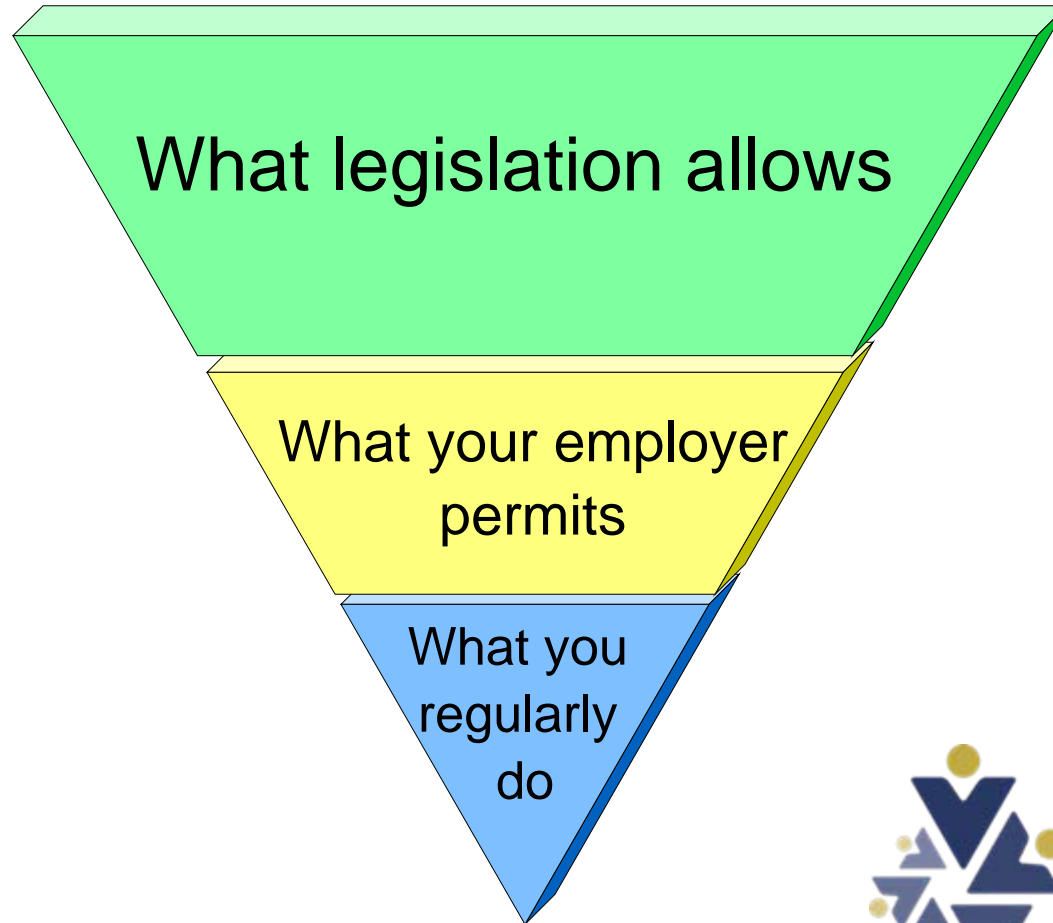
- Routine care giving to children
 - Child care
 - Assisting the parent with child care
 - Accompanying to school
- Other obligations that the person would have as a family member

Work, Social & Recreational

- The PSW's role includes assisting the person to participate in social and recreational events, including
 - accompanying the person
 - assisting while there
- A PSW may also support a person at the person's workplace



The Permission Triangle



Employer Policies

- Employers can and usually do set policies that limit a PSW's ability to perform acts
 - Can apply to controlled and non-controlled acts
 - May be a part of a contract the employer has with a third party
- Permitted activities may vary from client to client or programme to programme
- Obligation to work within the agency policy, even if acts may legally be done by a PSW



Controlled Acts

PSWs can perform certain controlled acts by

- Delegation
- Exemption

Delegation and exemption are not the same!

Delegation

- Not specifically defined under the RHPA
- Understood to be a process where a regulated health professional who is authorized to perform a controlled act gives that authority to someone who is not authorized
 - another regulated health professional; or
 - an unregulated person - e.g. PSW

Responsibility for correct performance remains with the health professional



Delegated Acts

- The controlled procedure must fall within the scope of the Act that can be delegated
- PSW must be competent, current and comfortable with the act and the have the background knowledge necessary
- PSW must receive instruction on the act with each client for whom the act is performed, even if the PSW has done it before
- Delegated acts are generally time limited activities for PSWs



Exempted Acts

- Refers to the situations defined in the *Regulated Health Professions Act*
 - Section 27 (2) (5) & (6)
 - Only these acts!
- Places responsibility for performance on the person *performing* the act – **the PSW!**

What Can be Exempted?

- Administering a substance by injection or inhalation (Section 27, (2), (5))
- Putting an instrument, hand or finger (Section 27, (2), (6))
 - beyond the external ear canal
 - beyond the point in the nasal passages where they normally narrow
 - beyond the larynx
 - beyond the opening of the urethra
 - beyond the labia majora
 - beyond the anal verge
 - into an artificial opening into the body



Exempted Acts

Before a PSW performs an exempted act

- The procedure must be routine for the client
- The client must be stable and the outcome must be predictable
- You must be competent, current and comfortable with the act and the have the background knowledge necessary
- You must receive instruction on the act with each client for whom the act is performed, even if you have done it before
 - Should be a person legally authorized to perform the act
 - Should be the person who monitors you afterward
- The agency establishes that the you are taught by an appropriate person, that the teaching is complete and the monitoring is taking place



Medication Administration Issues

- Administering a medication by one of the following methods **is not a controlled act and may be *legally* done by a PSW**
 - Oral
 - Topical
 - Eye, ear, nose drops
 - Transdermal patches
- **Exception**

The *Long Term Care Homes Act* **does not** allow anyone who is **not** an RN/RPN, MD to administer any medication in a **long term care home**

 - Nursing homes & homes for the aged
 - Not retirement or rest homes

Remember

- Even if you are legally able to perform an act, your employer may not allow you to do it, or to do it only under certain circumstances
- Not all potentially harmful acts are controlled acts
 - E.g. passive range of motion, chest clapping
- NO act is safe if you have not been trained to do it
- NO act is safe if you perform it incorrectly

Your Responsibilities

- To know what your scope of practise is:
 - ✓ As defined by legislation or regulation
 - ✓ As defined by your employer
- To ask for and receive the information you need to assist a client
- To ensure that you are
 - ✓ Competent
 - ✓ Current
 - ✓ Comfortable
 - ✓ Have practised and had any questions answered



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Before You Perform an Exempted Act

- Make certain:
 - The act is routine for the person
 - The outcomes expected are known
 - You are competent, current and comfortable with the act and the background knowledge
- Your agency permits you to perform the act
- You have received instruction on the act with *each* client for whom you perform the act, even if you've done it before
- You know when and by whom your performance will be monitored
- The client is comfortable with your performing the act



Questions?

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