

# Policy on Preferences for Appointment and Retention of Panchakarma Therapist

## -A Basic tool of treatment

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### Abstract

Panchakarma is a specialized therapeutic tool of Ayurveda, the success of which is classically explained through the concept of *Chikitsā Chatuspāda*<sup>1</sup>, including the *Vaidya*, *Aushadha*, *Rogī*, and *Paricāraka* (*Upasthata*). While significant focus is placed on diagnosis, treatment planning, and medication selection, the role of the Panchakarma therapist (*Paricāraka*) remains improperly recognized despite being important to the conduction of therapy. Clinical experience show that even well-planned treatments may fail if procedures are not performed with appropriate method, knowledge, skill, precision, consistency, and compassionate care. The therapist's direct involvement in administering Panchakarma procedures makes them equally responsible for therapeutic success or failure. This policy document highlights the critical role of Panchakarma therapists and highlights the need for a structured framework governing their appointment, training, performance evaluation and retention. Establishing such a policy aims to ensure standardized practice, enhance treatment outcomes, and uphold the authenticity and efficacy of Panchakarma therapy within institutional and clinical settings.

### Introduction

As explained by our Acharyas, A successful treatment stands on four pillars called as *chikitsa chatushpada*. Where each of them carry their own importance in the success of treatment.

Speaking of Panchakarma in specific, we all know the importance of *Vaidya*, *aushadha*, *rogi* and *Paricharaka*<sup>2</sup>.

Also, we all know that special care has been advised for panchakarma patients quoting the examples of *Gopala iva dandiga*, *Purna taila patra and taruna anda*. This is a collective responsibility of both *Panchakarma Vaidya* and panchakarma therapist<sup>3</sup>. But when we discuss the success story of any panchakarma treatment, we usually discuss about *roga*, *rogi*, *pareeksha*, *vaidya*, *aushadha*, panchakarma procedure, selection of specific medicines for panchakarma, etc. The most underrated or less discussed part is contribution of panchakarma therapists. During my experience I have keenly observed the importance of panchakarma therapist.

Irrespective of knowledge the doctor has, no matter how good the selection of procedure is, selection of medicine is, no matter how cooperative the patient is, if the therapist doesn't do his/her job with knowledge, perfection, analysis, consistency, compassion, the treatment will not be successful. They equally contribute for the success or the failure of all panchakarma treatments.

For instance, while discussing *basti doshas*, equal importance has been given to *basti pranita doshas*<sup>4</sup> also, quoting how a *basti* of best ingredients also may become harmful if not administered properly. Example-If the nozzle is obliquely inserted, then the fluid will not flow into the rectum. If the nozzle is shifted from one place to the other, then this may cause anal injury. If the bladder is compressed slowly, then the enema-fluid may not reach the colon. If the bladder is strongly compressed, then the fluid may rush very fast even

up to the throat. If the enema- fluid is very cold, then it may cause stiffness. If the enema – fluid is very hot, then it may cause burning sensation and fainting. If the enema – fluid is very unctuous, then it may cause numbness. If the enema- fluid is *ati ruksha*, then it may cause aggravation of *vayu*. If the enema – fluid is very thin or added with less quantity of salt, then it may lead to *ayoga*. If the enema- fluid is administered in large quantity, then it may cause *ati-yoga*. If the enema-fluid is viscid, then it may cause emaciation of the patient, and it moves in the colon very slowly. If the enema- fluid contains salt in excess, then it may cause burning sensation and diarrhea. Therefore, *basti* should be properly administered.

That is why we need to have a proper policy for selection and retention of such important entity.

**Keynotes: Ayurveda, Chikitsa chatuspada, paricharaka, panchakarma treatment, panchakarma therapist, appointment and retention policies**

### 1. Purpose

To make sure that Panchakarma therapies are delivered with the highest standards of safety, authenticity, and therapeutic effectiveness by prioritizing the appointment of trained and experienced Panchakarma therapists, while also ensuring their round-the-clock availability for patient care.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all recruitment and appointment of therapists in the Panchakarma departments of the institution and hospitals.

### 3. Policy Statement

- The institution shall **give preference to candidates who are properly trained and have proven experience in Panchakarma therapy** during recruitment and appointment.
- If not experienced, then they can be considered for proper training and experience under the senior experienced therapists for few months. They should have basic understanding of all diseases, examination, medicines and not just the treatment procedures.
- Institution can come up with specific evaluation methods for selection of therapists, also for time-to-time evaluation and updating the knowledge.
- Training and experience shall be considered essential qualifications to maintain patient safety, preserve classical Ayurvedic practice, and enhance institutional reputation.
- They should be given proper credits of success and they also should feel responsible for any failures in treatment.
- Regular health check-up and health benefits should be planned for therapists, and special concerns and measures to maintain proper personal hygiene of high standard should be the priority.
- Special training should be arranged by HRD for the behavioural standards to deal with all kinds of patients.
- To ensure extended care and **24×7 availability of therapists for patient needs**, the institution shall provide **accommodation within or near the premises** for Panchakarma therapists.
- Considering the **low availability and high demand for experienced Panchakarma therapists**, the institution should adopt proactive measures for recruitment, retention, and welfare of such professionals
- **Salary Structure:** A very important part of the success of treatment, Panchakarma therapists should be offered a standard salary in the range of based on experience, skill level, and years of experience

#### 4. Rationale

1. **Patient Safety:** Experienced therapists are adept at handling procedures with precision, reducing the risk of complications.
2. **Authenticity:** Trained professionals ensure therapies are conducted in accordance with Ayurvedic classics and physician instructions.
3. **Quality of Care:** Experienced therapists adapt **therapies according to patient** needs, improving outcomes and satisfaction.
4. **Treatment Results:** The skills of experienced therapists directly contribute to the **effectiveness and success of Panchakarma treatments**, leading to better recovery and improved patient health.
5. **Institutional Growth:** Effective treatment outcomes delivered by experienced therapists build **patient trust and satisfaction**, which in turn attracts more patients and enhances the reputation of the institution.
6. **Availability:** Provision of free accommodation ensures therapists are accessible for emergency or extended care.
7. **High Demand, Low Supply:** Due to the scarcity of skilled Panchakarma therapists and the growing demand for Ayurveda-based treatments globally, preference in recruitment is necessary to secure the best talent.
8. **Mentorship:** Skilled therapists contribute to the training of junior staff, strengthening the Panchakarma team.

#### 5. Appointment Criteria

- **Mandatory Requirements:**
  - Completion of recognized training in Panchakarma therapy.
  - Certification or diploma course from an accredited Ayurvedic institution.
- **Preferred Qualifications:**
  - Minimum of 2–5 years of professional experience in a Panchakarma unit.
  - If not experienced, then they can be considered for proper training and experience under the senior experienced therapists for few months.
  - Demonstrated ability to manage complex cases under physician supervision.
  - Experience in patient counselling, comfort, and safety practices

#### 6. Implementation

- **Recruitment** notices shall explicitly state the preference for trained and experienced Panchakarma therapists.
- **Selection:** Selection panels will assign higher weightage to prior training and work experience in Panchakarma units.
- **Accommodation:** Residential facilities shall be provided to Panchakarma therapists to ensure their availability for emergency and extended care services.
- **Compensation:** Salary will be fixed in the standard and acceptable range depending on qualifications and years of experience.

- **Retention:** Special incentives and recognition programs should be introduced, acknowledging the scarcity of skilled therapists.
- **Regular Internal training programs** should be provided for less-experienced recruits, under the mentorship of senior therapists.
- **Feedback:** Regular patient feedback regarding therapists should be taken and steps to be taken to improve the service.
- **Appreciation award:** Annual programs to appreciate the efforts and inspire all therapists.

## 7. Responsibilities<sup>5</sup>

- **Human Resources Department:** Ensure recruitment processes follow this policy.
- **Panchakarma Department Head:** Verify training credentials and evaluate professional experience during selection, and time to time evaluation. Regular reorientation programs to ensure update knowledge.
- **Institutional Management:** Provide accommodation, fair salaries, welfare measures, ongoing support, training opportunities, and retention strategies for experienced therapists.
- **Panchakarma consultants:** To have proper discussion of the patient's condition, treatment protocol and special customisation as per patient condition.

## Conclusion

**Panchakarma therapy is a highly skill-dependent and sensitive modality of Ayurvedic treatment, where the competence and commitment of the therapist play a decisive role in therapeutic outcomes. This policy underscores the essential contribution of Panchakarma therapists as an integral component of Chikitsā Chatuspāda and recognizes them as key stakeholders in patient safety, treatment effectiveness, and institutional credibility.**

**By prioritizing the appointment of trained and experienced therapists, establishing structured training and evaluation mechanisms, ensuring their continuous availability, and providing appropriate welfare, accommodation, and remuneration, the institution commits itself to delivering Panchakarma therapies with the highest standards of quality and authenticity. The policy also promotes accountability, professional growth, ethical conduct, and a culture of shared responsibility for both success and failure of treatment outcomes.**

**Effective implementation of this policy will strengthen Panchakarma services, enhance patient trust and satisfaction, foster mentorship and team development, and contribute to the long-term growth and reputation of the institution as a centre of excellence in Ayurvedic healthcare.**

## References:

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