



Scope of Practice



Prepared by NBHWC

Health and wellness coaches engage individuals and groups in evidence-based, client-centered processes that facilitate and empower clients to develop and achieve self-determined health and wellness goals.

Coaches assist clients to use their own insight, personal strengths, and resources to set goals, commit to action steps, and establish accountability in building an envisioned healthy lifestyle.

In this way, coaches empower clients through encouragement, exploration, the mobilization of internal strengths, the identification and utilization of external resources, and through the support and development of self-management strategies for executing sustainable, healthy lifestyle changes.

The coach's role is one of accountability partner, not director, in navigating behavioral change and exploring opportunities for growth and development. As facilitators of the behavior change process, health and wellness coaches support clients to achieve self-directed goals and behavioral changes consistent with the client's vision for health and wellbeing, informed by any treatment plans prescribed by the client's professional healthcare team. When appropriate, health and wellness coaches may offer evidence-based resources or information from nationally recognized authorities. Additionally, when working under the license of a qualified medical or allied health professional (e.g., physician, psychologist, physical therapist), health and wellness coaches may support the implementation of those professionals' treatment plans. On their own, however, coaches themselves do not diagnose, interpret medical data, prescribe or de-prescribe, recommend supplements, provide nutrition consultation or create meal plans, provide exercise prescription or instruction, consult and advise, or provide psychological therapeutic interventions* or treatment.



Health and wellness coaches who hold additional, active, national or state-recognized credentials may provide expert support and guidance within their professional scope for that credential; however, disclosure of the professional role and potential conflicts of interest must be discussed with the client and documented from the onset of a professional relationship. Health and wellness coaches should only function in dual roles with conscious intention and by clearly outlining both professional capacities, through discussion and documentation, as well as defining the boundaries of each. Further, health and wellness coaches must be well-versed in the professional capacity of each role, including the limits of knowledge and skills respective to each role, understand and demonstrate how to work within the limits of each professional role, and comply with all guiding ethical principles to ensure client interests and needs are at the forefront of the coach-client partnership.

**Therapeutic interventions are methods by which relevant, qualified professionals attempt remediation of a diagnosed medical or mental health condition, guided by the indications and contraindications noted for the intervention itself. Examples of therapeutic interventions provided in the context of treatment include, but are not limited to: Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR), Solution Focused Therapy, Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT), Internal Family Systems Therapy, and other such therapies and treatments relevant to the treatment of diagnosed medical and mental health conditions.*

