

ONCOLOGY MASSAGE ALLIANCE PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Do No Harm:

First and foremost is to do no harm to a patient who is living with cancer. Not only does this refer to the physical nature of your massage work, but also to the emotional nature in which you communicate during your contact with a cancer patient. There are some things you can do to help people dealing with cancer feel better: the primary one being offering them a space where they can be wholly and completely themselves.¹ Allow them to direct the conversation and respect what they do and do not want to talk about. Be a good listener and very cautious about not discussing other patient stories, conditions, or experiences.

Massage therapy often provides an emotional outlet for clients with cancer and you may experience a client becoming tearful or very emotional. Respect the boundaries that they establish by how much or how little they want to discuss. The types of massage that we are offering to patients are hand and foot massages.

Spread the Word about the OMA Foundation:

We encourage you to promote your own business outside of the Cancer Treatment Centers, but your main job during the hours you volunteer with the Oncology Massage Alliance (OMA) is to spread the word about OMA.

Professional Manner:

Act and dress in a professional manner while you are representing OMA. Please wear the OMA vests and your name/LMT identification badge. Always wear comfortable shoes (no open toes) and clean clothes. Gloves can be accessed at the facility; they are a single-time use.

It is important that you follow the HIPPA requirements and their volunteer guidelines that you have read and signed for the facility you are in. When providing OMA services, you should also follow the OMA Requirements and Guidelines. It is very important that you do not give your opinion, suggestions, or critic regarding the patient's medical condition or treatment.

When in a medical facility, do not promote your own business or give medical advice to anyone. Always defer patients to ask their doctor or nurse. If the patient, caregiver, or medical staff asks you for your private business card, only then should you give it out. We are in a delicate balance with the medical facility and do not want to appear as a subcontractor or promoter of our own businesses to their patients.

Charting Notes:

Documenting your time spent with a patient is extremely important and is a legal requirement. Take time after each session to record what you observed during the session and how well your client received the hand or foot massage. All charting note must be kept at the facility and not removed from the premises.

Include the following information:

1. No names of patients/caregivers – HIPAA rules.
2. If the patient gives you any details re: illness, meds, treatment, side effects - make a notation. If patient feels anxious, nauseous, or fatigued from treatment or medications, please note that.
3. Inquire if they have any neuropathy (loss of movement or sensation, tingling, burning, pain) in hands or feet. If so, on a pain scale from 1-10 (10 being the highest), ask them to let you know what it is *before* the massage. Ask if they have a preference for either hand or foot massage.

4. *During* the massage, what level of pressure did you give? Use the Tracy Walton scale, pressure levels 1-5. What techniques did you use?
5. *During* the massage, did you use lotion? What did you observe to the skin integrity, any bruises, etc.? Was patient sleeping or conversant during the massage?
6. At the *end* of the massage, ask if the pain level decreased (in a general conversation). This is important so we can document the efficacy of massage therapy session. What was the patient's response to the massage?
7. What was the caregivers' reaction? Did you perform any work on caregivers? If so, please explain.
8. Any notes from nurses, other medical staff re: that patient?
9. Any stories from the patients (testimonials) that we can use for future use?

Timesheets:

Each therapist must maintain, complete and sign their timesheets at the end of each month. These timesheets must be kept at the facility and completed at the end of the month. Therapists must inform the location Lead about any changes to their shift prior to those changes. Failure to do so may result in a delay of payment and possible removal.

¹ "Massaging clients with cancer," *Massage Therapy Journal*, pp38-41 winter 2010, v.49, no. 4 American Massage Therapy Association.