

**Oncology Massage Alliance**  
**April/May/June 2014**

# Infusion Room Report

## Oncology Massage Program

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# Summary

The general highlights of the Program are as follows:

- We continue coverage at Texas Oncology Midtown, Texas Oncology Central, Texas Oncology North, and Texas Oncology Round Rock. In March, we added Texas Oncology South to the list of infusion rooms we visit. At Texas Oncology South, we also go to the Radiation Center and work on patients after their radiation treatment once a month.
- In May, OMA received a generous donation from Texas Oncology. This will help fund the massage therapists working in Texas Oncology locations in Central Texas.
- The OMA Board and the OMA Operations Committee met in June.
- In June, OMA held a meet and greet get together. This meeting included the massage therapists, board members and advisory board members. We had a total of 21 attendees, including two new massage therapists from Dallas. This was the first time all three groups have gotten together, and was a very successful meeting.
- OMA added 4 new therapists between April and June - 3 in Austin, and 1 in Dallas: Cindy Spence, Megan Nutt, Robin Ryece and Carolyn Garza.
- OMA participated in three events in this first quarter:
  - Relay for Life - Central Texas and Medford, Oregon. In Texas, 5 massage therapists participated, and performed 16 massages for participants, and 22 massages for survivors and caregivers. \$200 was raised for the American Cancer Society. This is the first year OMA has participated in the Central Texas Relay for Life, and the second year for the Medford, Oregon Relay for Life.

We also participated in the State of Texas 2014 Wellness Fair. This is the second year we have participated in the State's event. Approximately 800-1,000 state employees attended this year. OMA's therapists and board members enjoyed networking with healthcare practitioners and State employees as they talked about the services that OMA offers to cancer survivors and caregivers as well as discussing the benefits of oncology massage.

# Infusion Room Stories

Each person we meet in the infusion room has such a special story and each one that we reach out to touches us deeply. By providing compassionate touch and a safe space for that person to simply relax, talk or just close their eyes and feel another's gentle touch is a great honor for us to connect with them and give them hope to just believe in their future. Here are some of their stories.

I massaged the hands of a female patient who was in her 50's, using level 1 pressure. She was experiencing tingling in her hands. She mentioned that last week after her hand massage (OMA) she was able to taste for the first time in a long time. She was so excited she went out and ate prime rib. She said the massage had temporarily taken away the neuropathy in her throat. Patient was very grateful.

The nurse asked if I would give a new patient a hand massage, since the patient was receiving her first chemo treatment. She had had a fainting spell from the meds before I got there. I gave her a gentle hand massage, which helped relieve her anxiety. She actually closed her eyes during the session! She was so appreciative and got to relax!

I massaged the feet of a female patient in her 60's, using level 1 pressure. The patient had never had a foot massaged and exclaimed when I was finished, 'Oh Wow! Now I understand!' The patient really enjoyed the massage.

I massaged the feet of a female client in her 60's, using level 1 pressure. It was her first day at the Infusion Center. She never had received a massage before. She said she couldn't believe how nice Texas Oncology was and how good she felt after the massage.

Female patient with neuropathy, she was experiencing pain and muscle activity in both feet, such as a jumping feeling. Used Level 1 on the Walton Scale, circles, long strokes, and spreading of tissue on the bottom of her feet. She had received massage last week, with the same symptoms. She stated that the stabbing pain in the bottoms of her feet was gone for the entire week, and had only returned the night before.

One of the nurses approached me to work on a female patient who was starting a new medication. She presented with severe neuropathy in her feet. She was very anxious; her heart was racing, she said. Worked on her feet and legs up to her knees, gentle strokes. The patient actually fell asleep; the twitching in her legs calmed.

Massaged the shoulders of one of the staff members. She was feeling a lot of stress; work was extremely busy, and she was also reminded of the loss of her child around this time of year. She was so happy to get a massage; she really felt relaxed.

I massaged the hands of a female patient in her 30's, using level 1 pressure. It was her first day at the Infusion Center. She was very excited to experience the hand massage and thought it was wonderful that there was a guitarist playing music. She said she couldn't believe how great of an experience getting chemo was. It was better than she could have ever expected!

This is the feedback given to the social worker: "Patient's wife and caregiver came to seek me out in the clinic and stated that the hand massage helped her husband with his neuropathy. He could feel

a difference and she was forever grateful for the massage she received as it helped her to relax and do a little something for herself.”

I gave a foot massage to a female patient – age range – 50s. She has neuropathy in both her hands and feet (numbness/tingling). I applied a gentle touch to her fingers (level 1 pressure Walton scale) and worked each finger. At the beginning, she only wanted me to massage her hands because she was embarrassed about her feet. She had lost one toenail and previously had edema in the feet (from chemo drugs). However, after the hand massage, she agreed to have a foot massage. Once again, I applied a gentle pressure to each foot and toe, using slow strokes, being mindful of her neuropathy. She said that the massage felt wonderful. She thanked me at the end of our session.

I gave a hand massage to a female caregiver (cancer survivor) who is in her 70s. Her husband is receiving chemotherapy today; he was recently diagnosed with cancer in April. The caregiver also told me that her daughter was diagnosed with breast cancer in January. She talked about this to me; and even with all of this overwhelming news, the caregiver said that she is thankful for her family. She was appreciative for the gentle touch massage (Walton pressure scale – level 1-2) and for our time together.

Female patient (age 74) receiving radiation via implanted needles, so she absolutely could not move. Massaged her hands just before the radiation treatment; used Walton Pressure Level 1 to massage her hands, mostly using a calming, nurturing touch. She said she really enjoyed the conversation and the massage; it provided a great distraction for her during this treatment.

Male caregiver in his mid-40’s received a shoulder & neck massage. His wife is a patient here and I’ve met both of them before in the infusion room. While his wife was receiving her radiation treatment, he decided it would be ok for him to receive a massage. Used Walton Pressure Level 3-4. He had always refused massage before, when his wife was present. He loved the massage and thanked me for working of them both.

Male patient in his 70’s with neuropathy in his feet, experienced as tingling in his toes. He stated that he was looking forward to the massage today, asking the nurse, “When do the massage therapists come here?” He was very happy to see me. I used gentle pressure (Walton Pressure Level 1-2), and focused on his toes. He was quiet during the massage, and smiled a lot. After the end of the session, he stated that the tingling in his toes was gone. He was very appreciative for the massage, and gave a donation to OMA.

Female patient in her mid-60’s; this is her first day of chemotherapy. The nurses said that she is doing very well. Her feet were very cold, so she loved my warm hands as I massaged her feet. She told me, “OMA is a blessing of God to the world.”

I massaged a male patient in his 70’s. This was his first time to receive a foot massage, and he was thrilled! He has some plantar warts and toenail fungus, and talked about the problems he has with his feet. He said his feet felt like “A Million Bucks!!” after the massage!

The nurse suggested I give a massage to a patient who was having a hard time with the chemo. He was very appreciative, and at the end of the session he thanked me and said, “You just make a hard day a little bit easier.”

# Monthly Statistics

Since the program began in February, 2011, we have been able to touch many people in so many ways. Below is a table outlining the program statistics for April, May and June 2014.

## April Statistics

	Patients Touched	Caregivers Touched	Staff Touched	Massage Therapists Worked	Total days in Infusion Room	Total days in Radiation Area	Volunteer Hours	OMA paid hours
Texas Oncology Midtown	79	1	1	4	16	N/A	0	32.25
Texas Oncology Central	31	0	3	3	11	N/A	19	0
Texas Oncology North	15	3	1	2	5	N/A	10.5	0
Texas Oncology Round Rock	30	2	2	3	9	N/A	15	0
Texas Oncology South	64	0	4	3	10	1	25.50	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>32.25</b>

## May Statistics

	Patients Touched	Caregivers Touched	Staff Touched	Massage Therapists Worked	Total days in Infusion Room	Total days in Radiation Area	Volunteer Hours	OMA paid hours
Texas Oncology Midtown	52	2	0	4	12	N/A	0	22.25
Texas Oncology Central	16	1	2	3	6	N/A	8.5	0
Texas Oncology North	25	0	1	2	7	N/A	14.5	0
Texas Oncology Round Rock	44	2	0	3	13	N/A	21.75	0
Texas Oncology South	57	3	2	3	9	1	23.25	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>22.25</b>

## June Statistics

	<b>Patients Touched</b>	<b>Caregivers Touched</b>	<b>Staff Touched</b>	<b>Massage Therapists Worked</b>	<b>Total days in Infusion Room</b>	<b>Total days in Radiation Room</b>	<b>Volunteer Hours</b>	<b>OMA paid hours</b>
<b>Texas Oncology Midtown</b>	53	4	0	4	10	N/A		20.25
<b>Texas Oncology Central</b>	25	1	0	3	7	N/A	9	0
<b>Texas Oncology North</b>	27	3	0	2	7	N/A	13.25	0
<b>Texas Oncology Round Rock</b>	43	3	1	3	10	N/A	19	0
<b>Texas Oncology South</b>	45	0	8	3	7	1	16	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>57.25</b>	<b>20.25</b>