

**Oncology Massage Alliance**  
**January/February/March 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 March, Tracy Link, one of the massage therapists in New Braunfels, said she would continue to go to the New Braunfels Cancer Care Center. Tracy had been going to NBCCC previously, but had taken a break because of personal issues.
- The OMA Board met in March and the OMA Operations Committee met in November and December.
- In January and March, the OMA massage therapists met. These meetings are a way for the therapists to get to know each other, discuss concerns and encourage each other. It's also a way to disseminate information about massaging in the infusion rooms. We also started a book club, which also encourages conversation regarding oncology massage.
- OMA added 5 new therapists between January and March - 4 in Austin, and 1 in Dallas: Kelly Bien, Susan Gee, Jessica Johnson, Reno Robinson and Mary Ann Silva Ward.
- OMA participated in two events in this first quarter: 20 Colors/20 Hours, where we provided chair massages to the participants. Four massage therapists and one non-massage therapist board member represented OMA. The massage therapists gave 24 complimentary chair massages to cyclists and volunteers. We also participated at the Lakeway Health Fair. Two board members represented OMA there. We made several vendor and participant connections.

# 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.

A male patient in his 70's decided to try a hand massage. He has neuropathy - pain and burning - in his feet. He said, "This is very relaxing! It is a great service because no matter how many times you come in here, you're always nervous! The massage really helps put me at ease. Thank you so much!"

I gave a hand massage to a male patient who was in his 60s. He agreed to a massage after he saw his wife receiving one. Today was his first chemotherapy treatment. He had no signs of neuropathy yet. He had an IV in an arm, so I just massaged his opposite hand. He told me that next time he would have a port device, so he would like both hands massaged! We had a good talk and I was happy that he was opening up to having a massage, and that he felt comfortable with me. He talked about his family too. He was very appreciative for the relaxing hand massage.

I gave a neck/shoulder/back massage to an oncology infusion nurse today. She was sitting at her desk and when I asked her if she would like a brief relaxing massage, she was thrilled! She said that her neck/shoulders hurt her a lot (due to computer work) and she was happy to be able to relax a bit. She closed her eyes; patients walking by gave her a "thumbs up" sign when they saw her getting a massage. The nurse said that she could feel the stress slip away as I massaged her back. She was very appreciative.

I massaged a woman in her 60's. She was very surprised and happy to be offered a hand massage. She said, "I can feel my whole body getting a massage!"

I gave a foot massage to a male patient who was in his 60s. He told me that he had neuropathy in his feet (tingling toes) so I was mindful of that when I massaged his feet. One foot was especially dry with flaky skin. He told me that he was appreciative of my gentle touch (level 1-2 Walton scale). He said that he had gotten a pedicure recently (he and his wife went together) but he did not like it; however, he said that my touch was good and felt comfortable. He also wanted his wife to get a hand massage from me!"

Gave a hand massage to this older man, a rancher who described his experience of getting positioned during his radiation treatments as "having his arms lassoed." His voice was very weak from the treatments, but he talked to me quite a lot anyway. His wrists were very tight and sore, so I worked both hands and wrists, using Levels 1 & 2 on the Walton Scale. He seemed to get a lot of relief from the massage, and from having the chance to talk to someone unrelated to his cancer treatments.

I gently massaged the feet of a female patient who told me that she had 'happy feet' at the end of our session!

I massaged the feet of a young female patient today. Today was her first day of chemotherapy and she kept on calling Texas Oncology Central – her chemo spa! She really enjoyed the gentle touch on her feet; she said that it helped her relax. She was appreciative for the massage.

I gave a hand massage to a male patient probably in the mid 60s age range. He was receiving a shot today – he has an anemic condition – is a kidney transplant patient. He talked about his physical and emotional pain. I listened to him for over 20 minutes. He was very appreciative for the gentle touch massage and for our conversations.

I massaged the hands of a male patient today (age range: 70-75). He told me that his hands felt “stiff.” I gave him a gentle touch massage (pressure level 1-2, Walton scale) and he said that his hands felt much better after the massage. It was his birthday, so the massage was extra special. He was appreciative and thanked me.

I massaged the feet of a female patient – age range: 40s – who was receiving the “Red Devil” chemotherapy drug. The nurse was glad that I was there so I could distract her with a gentle touch massage (levels 1-2 of Walton scale) to the patient’s feet. The patient actually closed her eyes for a bit during the session. Her husband was sitting next to her and he thanked me for being able to relax her. Both of them were very appreciative.

I gave a foot massage to a male patient, age range: 60s – 70s. He has neuropathy in his feet (numbness and tingling). He has told his doctor about this side effect from the chemotherapy. Patient was happy to see how massage would help decrease the neuropathy side effects. As soon as I placed my hands on his foot and started to gently massage his toes, he stated that he could actually feel his toes start to wake up. (“I can feel my feet again!”) He closed his eyes during the session; after the it was over, he thanked me and said that he was very glad that OMA is now coming to Texas Oncology Round Rock on a weekly basis. He thanked me for the gentle touch (level 1-2 Walton scale) – it helped to decrease the neuropathy in his feet.

I gave a hand massage to a female patient in her mid 30s. She has some neuropathy in her fingers (tingling); she said that she received a hand massage last time from an OMA therapist and it helped relieve her neuropathy side effects. Her hands looked somewhat dry and chapped. Patient was talkative during the session; she even asked if we could be here next time when she receives chemo! She was very appreciative for the gentle touch massage and for our conversations.

I massaged a woman in her 80’s. She was very stressed out worrying if she was going to be able to get chemo today, and at the same time, worrying about how sick she was going to feel when she got chemo. She has neuropathy in her feet. I used gentle pressure - level 1-2. She said that after the massage the neuropathy in her right foot totally went away. She was very happy with the massage.

I gave a female caregiver a shoulder massage. She is in her 50’s. She had a lot of stress, and was very appreciative of the massage. She said, “Woo hoo! I feel like I just took a valium. This is my lucky day!”

# 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 January, February and March 2014.

## January Statistics

	Patients Touched	Caregivers Touched	Staff Touched	Massage Therapists Worked	Total days in Infusion Room	Volunteer Hours	OMA paid hours	Donations
Texas Oncology Midtown	54	6	0	4	13	0	24.15	\$603.75
Texas Oncology Central	66	4	0	5	15	31.50	0	\$40.00
Texas Oncology North	16	4	0	1	3	4	0	\$50.00
Texas Oncology Round Rock	24	1	0	3	8	15.75	0	\$20.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>51.25</b>	<b>24.15</b>	<b>\$713.75</b>

## February Statistics

	Patients Touched	Caregivers Touched	Staff Touched	Massage Therapists Worked	Total days in Infusion Room	Volunteer Hours	OMA paid hours	Donations
Texas Oncology Midtown	57	3	0	4	14	0	26.25	\$661.25
Texas Oncology Central	39	2	5	4	11	19.50	0	\$0.00
Texas Oncology North	21	2	0	1	5	8	0	\$100.00
Texas Oncology Round Rock	38	2	2	3	10	18.50	0	\$25.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>26.25</b>	<b>\$786.25</b>

## March 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>Volunteer Hours</b>	<b>OMA paid hours</b>	<b>Donations</b>
<b>Texas Oncology Midtown</b>	64	2	1	4	14		27.25	\$681.25
<b>Texas Oncology Central</b>	37	2	0	5	11	18	0	\$5.00
<b>Texas Oncology North</b>	17	2	0	2	7	12.70	0	\$10.00
<b>Texas Oncology Round Rock</b>	29	2	3	3	8	19.75	0	\$25.00
<b>Texas Oncology South</b>	37	2	3	3	8	19.75	0	\$15.00
<b>New Braunfels Cancer Care Center</b>	12	0	12	1	4	7	0	\$0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>50.45</b>	<b>27.25</b>	<b>\$721.25</b>

# Donations

January	February	March	TOTAL
\$713.75	\$786.25	\$721.25	\$2221.25