

Oncology Massage Alliance
January/February/March 2015

Infusion Room and Radiation Room Report Oncology Massage Program

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Summary

The general highlights of the Program are as follows:

- We continue coverage in Austin at Texas Oncology - Midtown, Central, North, Round Rock, South and Sammons Center in Dallas and at Austin Cancer Center - Central Austin. Because of injuries with some massage therapists at Texas Oncology South, we have not been able to go to the Radiation Center and work with patients after their radiation treatments this quarter.
- OMA added eight new therapists this quarter: Pete Deckinga, Sherryl Wiseman, Shelli Lopes-Barnes and Andrea Owen in Austin, Lisa Nemeckay and Renee Houston in Dallas, Alicia Lingenfelter in Houston and Catheryn Murphy in San Antonio.
- OMA awarded an Educational Stipend to Lisa Nemeckay and Andrea Owen. Lisa attended Gayle MacDonald's oncology massage class in Dallas in March.
- Once again, OMA participated in 20 Colors/20 Hours, on Saturday, February 7. This is a 20 hour indoor cycling event benefitting Cancer Support Community Central Texas and Color Cancer. Five therapists provided free chair massage to the cyclists and one board member talked with participants about OMA's services.
- OMA offered complimentary chair massages to the staff at Texas Oncology North - our first time to do this. Four therapists provided massages to the staff at TON.
- OMA partnered with the AWAY Spa therapists from the W Hotel for the Colon Cancer Coalition's Rear In Gear 5K Run/Walk event on March 22. This event helped raise funds for colon cancer awareness efforts in the Austin area. Six OMA therapists attended to promote OMA. Four massage therapists from the AWAY Spa provided free chair massages.
- The OMA Board met February 9, and the Operations Committee met February 22, and March 15 with the Lead Therapists.

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 gave a hand massage to a lady in her 50's. She is here for her husband, who is receiving chemo, and she is having trouble with fear due to her husband's cancer. She said she tries to give it all to God, but it's difficult. She was very grateful for the massage.

A female patient in her 40's was receiving fluids in the infusion room. Today was her first day of diagnosis, and she was visibly upset and crying. Through her tears she accepted a foot massage. Halfway through the massage she stopped crying and began to talk about her diagnosis. She said, "This massage is the best thing ever!" She was clearly surprised by how much massage helped her.

I gave a hand massage to a woman in her 60's. Her daughter is receiving chemotherapy, and wasn't interested in a massage. When I offered a massage to her (the caregiver), she looked like she felt bad to say she wants a massage because she isn't getting chemo. But as soon as I started to massage her hand, she closed her eyes, took a deep breath, and said, "The stress is flying out from my hand". She seemed very relaxed and enjoyed the massage.

I massaged a male patient in his 80's. He said that his wife passed away last year while he was in the hospital, and that he misses her all the time. He said it felt so good to be touched.

I massaged a patient who was skeptical about receiving a massage. But after the massage, he said, "That **does** feel good! I feel like I'm somebody now!"

A male patient, who is a repeat client, received a massage. He's in his 50's. He states that he's "feeling pretty run down." I used gentle massage, and the client slept through the last half of the massage. He said, "I didn't realize how much stress I was feeling until you started taking it away. Thank you!"

A male client in his 50's received a foot massage. He does not have neuropathy, but does have some swelling due to his treatment. I used general relaxation massage on his feet. He said, "They feel like new feet! Even better than a nap!"

I massaged the hands of a 65 year old patient. Both of her hands were slightly "puffy" with mild tingling reported. She thanked me and said her tingling sensations were gone after the massage!

I gave a hand massage to a female patient in her mid-70's. This was her first hand massage, and she had always refused in the past. I used a level 1 pressure. She thanked me and said she was surprised how much she enjoyed it and said she didn't realize it would relax her this much.

I massaged the hands of a patient in her mid 40's. She said she can't believe people will pass on getting a free massage! She mentioned that the massage helped with her nausea symptoms. She thanked me several times.

I massaged the hands of a 65 year old patient. This was her first session of chemo. She really enjoyed the foot massage and mentioned that she wanted to schedule all follow-up appointments on Tuesday

mornings when I'm there!

One of the nurses approached me to offer to give a massage to a female patient. She is in her 60's. I gave her a hand massage. During the massage, she said, "Something, at least one thing should feel good when I come here." After the massage was done, the nurse came to thank me. She said the patient can be difficult at times, but the massage really made her relax.

I worked on a female patient for the first time. She was reluctant to receive a massage because she has severe peripheral neuropathy and sensitivity in her feet. But, she agreed when I assured her I would stop if it did not feel good. I used very slow, very gentle strokes. She was surprised, and said it felt "wonderful". She and her daughter were very thankful, and the nurse also expressed appreciation.

One of the nurses approached me to see if I could work on a female patient. She was feeling nauseous. I gave her a gentle hand massage, and she said she felt much better after the massage.

I gave a male patient in his 50's a foot massage. At first, he declined, but then changed his mind. He closed his eyes and rested during the massage. His daughter said that she had never seen him do that before. He enjoyed the massage and thanked me.

I gave a caregiver a shoulder massage. He had very tight shoulders, and really enjoyed the massage. He said, "I'm sure you know this, but what you do in here is so important."

I gave a 67 year old female patient a foot massage. She has tension in her lower legs and feet, and has peripheral neuropathy in her toes. She said, "I could tell you to stop in three hours if you would keep massaging my feet! It feels great!"

I saw a repeat client who said his feet felt better after the last massage I gave him. He has peripheral neuropathy in his feet. He says it feels like he's wearing heavy socks, and it affects his balance. His wife watched me and asked about my approach of lengthening and mobilizing his toes. He said his feet felt more awake and he had less discomfort after the massage.

I massaged a male patient in his 50's. He is a repeat client. He has peripheral neuropathy in his hands - numbness, tingling and pain. He said, "After you massage my hands, I have more flexibility in my fingers."

I gave a quick massage to a patient in his 60's. He was almost done with his treatment today and was anxious to get home. He relaxed during the session, and said that the massage was worth waiting for!

I saw a patient on her first day. She said she was feeling pretty good, and was blessed to be offered a foot massage. Said it was "Delightful!"

This was a client's first chemo, and she was feeling very cold, anxious and tense. She was alone, and seemed to have a language barrier. I spent a long time with her and she relaxed considerably. She left me with a brilliant smile!

Monthly Statistics

Since the program began in February, 2011, we have been able to touch many people in so many ways. The monthly tables below represent the actual hours OMA massage therapists worked in each of the facilities. Because OMA does not have the funding to achieve our goal of \$25 per hour for our oncology massage therapists, we provide a quarterly stipend based on current funding.

The three columns for patients, caregivers, and staff touched represent individuals that received massage from our therapists. The "Massage Therapists worked" column represents the number of individual therapists that worked in that facility. The "Total days in infusion room" and "Total days in Radiation Area" columns show how many days (Monday through Friday) that the therapists were in the facility. The "OMA Paid hours" column represents a quarterly minimum of 12 hours (4 hours per month) that a therapist worked with the exception of Texas Oncology Midtown which is sponsored by Betty Kuhl in honor of her son, Rob Hill. Therapists receive a financial stipend for these hours. The next column shows the hours therapists worked beyond the 12 hour minimum and for which they did not receive compensation but demonstrates their compassion and dedication to this valued work. The last column shows donations that were given in the infusion rooms. OMA is very honored to have such a wonderful team of oncology massage therapists and all of the generous donors without which our work would not be possible. Thank you!

January Statistics

	Patients Touched	Caregivers Touched	Staff Touched	Massage Therapists Worked	Total days in Infusion Room	Total days in Radiation Area	OMA paid hours	Volunteer Hours	Donations
Texas Oncology Midtown	37	3	1	3	9		17.5		\$20.00
Texas Oncology Central	27	2	0	2	6		7.5		
Texas Oncology North	26	6	3	3	10		12	7.25	\$128.00
Texas Oncology Round Rock	56	1	0	4	13		16	12.75	\$27.00
Texas Oncology South	22	0	0	3	5		8	2	\$18.00
Austin Cancer Center - Central Austin	11	1	1	1	3		4	2	\$20.00
Texas Oncology Sammons Cancer Center, Dallas	31	1	0	3	8		10	6	
Total	210	14	5	19	54	0	75	30	\$213.00

February Statistics

	Patients Touched	Caregivers Touched	Staff Touched	Massage Therapists Worked	Total days in Infusion Room	Total days in Radiation Area	OMA paid hours	Volunteer Hours	Donations
Texas Oncology Midtown	33	1	2	3	9		16.5		\$25.00
Texas Oncology Central	19	1	0	3	7		8	2	
Texas Oncology North	25	4	0	3	8		12	2.5	\$10.00
Texas Oncology Round Rock	47	2	2	4	11		14.5	7.5	\$4.00
Texas Oncology South	35	0	0	2	5		8	2	\$91.00
Austin Cancer Center - Central Austin	7	2	0	1	4		4	0.75	
Texas Oncology Sammons Cancer Center, Dallas	30	0	0	2	6		8	4	
Total	196	10	4	18	50	0	71	18.75	\$130.00

March Statistics

	Patients Touched	Caregivers Touched	Staff Touched	Massage Therapists Worked	Total days in Infusion Room	Total days in Radiation Area	OMA paid hours	Volunteer Hours	Donations
Texas Oncology Midtown	49	2	1	3	12		23.5		\$70.00
Texas Oncology Central	26	2	0	2	6		7	1.5	\$5.00
Texas Oncology North	30	4	0	3	8		12	3.5	\$20.00
Texas Oncology Round Rock	47	2	0	4	14		14.5	10.75	\$10.00
Texas Oncology South	25	1	0	2	5		8	3	
Austin Cancer CentAustin Cancer Center - Central Austin	10	1	0	1	3		4	2	\$20.00
Texas Oncology - Sammons Cancer Center, Dallas	53	1	0	3	11		12	10	\$10.00
Total	240	13	1	18	54	0	81	30.75	\$135.00

Donations

January	February	March	TOTAL
\$213.00	\$130.00	\$135.00	\$478.00