

Oncology Massage Alliance
July/August/September 2014

Infusion and Radiation 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, Texas Oncology Round Rock, and Texas Oncology South. At Texas Oncology South, we continue to go to the Radiation Center and work on patients after their radiation treatment once a month.
- Our new location is in Dallas at Texas Oncology - Baylor Charles Sammons Cancer Center. The Lead Therapist is Susan Gee, with Cindy Spence. In 2015, Andrea Cutshall will be joining them.
- OMA added 2 new therapists between July and September - Kerry Jordan in Austin and Andrea Cutshall in Dallas.
- The Educational Outreach Committee was formed to address any requests for presentations, writing articles, etc. The Chairperson is Geri Ruane, and members are Madeline Brock, Kazuko DeVirgilio, Kerry Jordan, and Cindy Spence.
- OMA participated in four events in this third quarter:
 - Six OMA therapists travelled to Houston to help facilitate the 10th Annual Integrative Oncology Training Conference for Acupuncturists, Massage Therapists and Yoga Teachers/Mind-Body Practitioners held at the M.D. Anderson Cancer Center July 18-20. Attending were: Kelly Bien, Madeline Brock, Kazuko DeVirgilio, Kerry Jordan, Susan Prins and Geri Ruane. They were asked to be assistants during the hands on portion of the conference.

On August 11, Madeline Brock and Kazuko DeVirgilio gave a presentation to a group of Austin massage therapists from the Austin Massage Therapist Meetup Group at Lauterstein-Conway Massage School (TLC) on Monday, August 11th. The topics focused on OMA and oncology massage.

Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired Health Fair, August 21. Two board members and three massage therapists manned a table at the fair.

Hands Feet & Heart, Texas Chapter of the Neuropathy Association, August 25. Geri Ruane and Madeline Brock gave a presentation focused on massage and neuropathy and OMA.

Texas Oncology - Round Rock, held a chair massage event for the staff, September 24.

- The OMA Board met August 4th; the Operations Committee held their conference call meetings on July 13th and September 21st; and the Lead Therapist Operations Committee had their conference call meeting on July 27th.

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 feet of a female patient in her 50-60's. She has peripheral neuropathy in her toes (numbness and tingling). Her skin was somewhat dry. She said that her neuropathy was getting worse even though her hair was growing back. She had an ant bite on her toe, which she didn't realize for awhile because her toes were so numb. I gently massaged each toe along with the entire foot. I applied Pressure level 1-2. At the end of the session, she thanked me and said that her toes felt much better...and that she could feel her toes!

I gave a hand massage to a gentleman in his 70's. The nurse asked me to massage him since he was experiencing anxiety. He was worried about hearing more bad news about his health. When I was massaging his hands, he told me that he thought massage was not "manly" and that I would think the same! He calmed down almost immediately after starting the session.

I gave a shoulder and back massage to a caregiver, age 60-65. She told me that since her husband was diagnosed with cancer and going for treatment, she has forgotten to take care of herself. I applied gentle pressure to her shoulders and back. After the session was over, she said that the massage gave her more energy - almost immediately! She was appreciative of the massage.

I gave a massage to a gentleman I've seen before. He had swelling last week, but it was significantly reduced (taking diuretics). I did a general relaxation for his feet. He said, "This makes me forget about cancer for awhile!"

I massaged a gentleman who always looks for me. He requested deeper pressure, used Level 2, which he liked. He told the nurse supervisor that OMA foot massages were "the best thing that's ever happened around here!"

A male patient with leukemia received a massage. He is in his 50's and has neuropathy in his feet. He has pain in his heel and tingling in his toes. I gave a gentle massage. He was surprised at how much relief he felt and said it was the closest he has felt to "normal" in the past 3 months.

I massaged the hands of a male patient in his 80's using a Level 1 pressure. He never had a massage before and said he loved it. He asked if we would be here next week when he returned for another session of chemo.

I gave a 65 year old female patient a foot massage with severe neuropathy and lymphedema risk. I used holding and light pressure because she stated, "My feet are as dead as a mackerel." She could feel almost nothing when I began, and by the end of the massage, she said that she could actually feel her feet again. She was amazed and so grateful for what OMA is doing.

I worked on a female patient in her late 30's. She had a bad reaction to one of the chemo drugs, so she was on oxygen and having her blood pressure taken frequently. She was very anxious and at the prompting of her husband and the nurse, she agreed to a foot massage. I started the massage and

she fell asleep within a few minutes. I watched her blood pressure readings. The readings started at 154/85; the next reading was 143/83; and when I finished it was 134/78. Very nice! She was asleep when I left.

I massaged a woman in her 70's. She has restless leg syndrome, and was very restless to start, but was able to relax noticeably. She responded well to micro-manipulations of the ankle and metatarsal bones. She closed her eyes and rested. After the massage, she said, "Thank you. You are a gentle soul."

I offered a massage to a female patient. She said her hands were very painful due to neuropathy. Her chemo was stopped last week because the side effects were so severe. I gave her a light massage using Pressure level 1. After the massage, the pain was gone! She felt so much better, and kept thanking me.

I massaged a female patient in her 80's. She is diabetic and has CIPN in hands and feet, as well as old injuries to both thumbs. I provided gentle massage to both hands. After 5-10 minutes of massage, she said, "Oh! I can feel that! I can feel my hand!"

I offered a patient a foot massage. She has been fighting cancer since 1997. She has a great attitude and expressed much gratitude for the massage. Said, "If it wasn't for people like you, I couldn't get through this." She thanked me again and again.

When I offered a female patient a massage, her mouth literally dropped open! She was having a hard day and became tearful expressing her gratitude. She asks her family for foot rubs to help her peripheral neuropathy, but no one is willing. She said thank you repeatedly.

I received this email after my visit. The bible verse he is referring to is on my business card: "I'm the long gray haired guy with my friend Sandi. Today you gave her a foot massage. I want to thank you for lifting her spirits. She has been smiling since you left and yesterday was not a very good day for her emotionally.

Two years ago, Sandi was diagnosed stage 3 breast cancer brca1 3n. She had both breast removed and her ovaries. She completed chemo before the surgeries so that they had positive results. Last March, she learned she was stage 4 with the cancer in her lungs. She had surgery to remove part of her right lung and she was supposed to have completed chemo today.

Yesterday we learned they want to extend the chemo treatments. Sandi has always tackled cancer like a super human. However, yesterday, she was indicating that she was ready to stop treatment so she can feel better.

You have no idea how much your simple foot massage did to lift her spirits. I cannot express in enough words the gratitude I feel for someone to express their personal time and empathy to a complete stranger.

Unlike Sandi, I am a nonbeliever. She showed me your bible verse after I read about the people in Austin and the others involved in your organization. I came to realize this is not a commercial venture and that each of you has your own story to tell. So if Sandi's beliefs are real, then today I met one of God's Angels.

Thank you, Kelley

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 July, August and September 2014.

July 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	61	7	1	4	13	N/A	0	27.5
Texas Oncology Central	51	5	0	3	13	N/A	25	0
Texas Oncology North	27	3	0	2	7	N/A	13	0
Texas Oncology Round Rock	53	2	0	3	14	N/A	24.25	0
Texas Oncology South	61	3	4	4	10	5	33.50	0
Texas Oncology Sammons Cancer Center, Dallas	31	6	0	2	6	N/A	12	0
Total	284	26	5	18	63	5	107.75	27.5

August 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	28	6	0	4	9	N/A	0	16.25
Texas Oncology Central	29	0	0	2	6	N/A	8.5	0
Texas Oncology North	14	2	0	2	4	N/A	7.5	0
Texas Oncology Round Rock	46	2	0	3	10	N/A	19.5	0
Texas Oncology South	134	10	3	4	21	5	51	0
Texas Oncology Sammons Cancer Center, Dallas	47	4	0	2	8	N/A	16	0
Total	298	24	3	17	58	5	102.5	16.25

September 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	34	1	2	2	8	N/A	0	15.5
Texas Oncology Central	56	0	0	2	9	N/A	16.5	24
Texas Oncology North	1	0	0	1	1	N/A	1.5	12
Texas Oncology Round Rock	43	1	1	4	11	N/A	21	48
Texas Oncology South	113	4	1	4	21	3	42	48
Texas Oncology Sammons Cancer Center, Dallas	58	4	0	2	9	N/A	20	24
Total	305	10	4	15	59	3	101	171.5