

Oncology Massage Alliance
July/August/September 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;
 - Dallas at Texas Oncology Sammons Center and Mary Crowley Research Center;
 - New Braunfels at New Braunfels Cancer Center;
 - Houston at North Cypress Cancer Center
- OMA added two new therapists this quarter, Larry DeLa Garza and Joanna Moses in Austin.
- OMA participated at the Staying Connected Wellness Fair for the Employee Retirement System on September 2nd. Four therapists and two board members represented OMA.
- OMA offered complimentary chair massages to the staff at Texas Oncology South on September 3rd. Five therapists provided 40 chair massages to the staff at TOS.
- OMA participated at the Brain Power 5K September 13th. This is our second year to participate at this event. Seven therapists gave 14 chair massages to survivors. We also had an OMA Team participating in the 5K. We had a total of seven team members, which included four OMA therapists!
- OMA gave out quarterly stipends to 12 therapists.
- The OMA Board met on August 24th, and the Operations Committee met on September 7.

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 patient finally gave in to the nurses prodding him to stay for a hand massage. He stated he had never had one before and that "Arthur" (arthritis) was visiting him today. Once I started on his second hand, he made the comment how good his hands feel, and how relaxed his whole body was. New convert to massage!

I massaged the hands and feet of a female patient in her 50's receiving infusion for cervical cancer. She found out that we offered massage, but we did not have a therapist available the day she was receiving treatment, so I came up to take care of her. She was so appreciative and felt that every one in the infusion room should have "this kind of caretaking!"

I gave a hand massage to a female patient in her 50s-60s. Her skin was a bit dry and she said that she had some arthritis in both hands. I gently massaged each hand; she was very happy to receive the massage, and was in a good mood afterwards. She told another patient about how wonderful the massage was!

A female patient who is in her 50s was talking with her friend about ways to reduce stress. When I offered massage, she was interested and shocked it is offered! She stated over and over how wonderful it felt. She reclined her chair back and appeared much more relaxed. She told me she takes pills to relax before chemo, but now is a "believer" in the power of massage. She was very appreciative.

I massaged a female patient in her 60s. I had seen her the previous week, which had been her first day of chemo. She said the massage on her first day really helped calm her down. T

A patient requested the nurse to have me come over after she had seen me massaging clients. She said, "Tuesday is my usual day, but I'll look for you again if I'm ever here on Friday!"

A young patient's mother has been undergoing a lot of stress and exhaustion. The nurse recommended her to get a massage. I massaged her neck and shoulders and listened while she talked about her daughter's challenges. Some quiet emotional release, (tears), and gradual relaxation. She was very appreciative.

A woman in her 70s had some rashes on her legs as a result of a bad reaction to steroids. She was very happy to receive a gentle foot massage, and said it helped her relax all over.

A patient came in very frustrated with the radiation burn she had, but left laughing!

I massaged a male patient in his mid 60s. He is a repeat recipient, and last time he was so embarrassed about his feet, he kept his socks on. This time, he was waiting for me with his shoes off! His peripheral neuropathy was much worse, and he requested deeper pressure. He marveled repeatedly over how good it felt, "amazing", "can't believe what a difference", "I'm so relaxed, I don't know if I can walk out of here." He was very grateful.

I gave a foot massage to a female patient in her 60s-70s who told me that she felt patches of tingling on the tops of her feet. I offered her a gentle relaxation massage with focused holds (to the feet), along with some stimulation of the tingling areas. At the end of the session, the patient reported that the massage had eliminated the tingling. She said, "No tingling! Yay!"

The wife of a male patient in his 50s agreed to have a hand massage. Her husband (patient) said that she could really use some pampering. She talked during the massage about her husband's health and the stress of being a caretaker. She appreciated our time together. Her husband thanked me, too.

I massaged a female patient in her 70s. She said the last time she was there, I wasn't there to give her a massage, and her feet swelled when she got home. That never happens when she gets massaged during her infusion.

I massaged a woman in her 40s. She said, "The last time you gave me a massage, it was the best infusion experience I had! I had hardly any side effects!"

I massaged the hands of a 65 year old patient. She told me how much she looks forward to her massage every Wednesday. Very sweet lady - she looked more tired than usual, but she mentioned she felt better after the massage.

I saw a patient I had given a massage to in the past. She is in her 70s. Her feet were swollen, nails looked like they were going to fall off soon. I gave her a combination of holding an light, nurturing strokes. She began crying briefly at one point and said she was "so tired of this." I talked with her some, then she closed her eyes and held her daughter's hand.

I gave a foot massage to an elderly woman who reported worsening neuropathy. After the massage, she said, "My feet feel like they are part of my body again, and not just two painful blocks at the ends of my feet!" She really appreciated the pain relief.

I gave a massage to a caregiver. She became a little teary-eyed as she received her hand massage and we talked. She couldn't believe that we massage them, too! She said that caregivers get forgotten.

I massaged a female patient 60-65 yrs old. She readily accepted a hand massage. The nurse approached to draw blood as I started the massage. I massaged throughout port access and blood draw. The patient commented that the massage felt good and kept her mind off of the "poke".

The patient was anxious because of restless leg syndrome and neuropathy in left foot/leg. When I approached her, she was sitting forward in her chair and slapping her foot against the floor. She was happy to receive massage. Five minutes in to the massage, she started to relax and breathe deeper. She laid back and relaxed, closed her eyes and let go of the tension in her left leg. She asked if she could take me home with her!

I asked a male patient if he would like a massage. He declined, but said, "But my wife would like a hand massage. She is going through the rough part of the treatment." She was happy to receive a massage. She said, "This is releasing so much stress. I really need this." She closed her eyes during the hand massage. When it was over, both husband and wife thanked me and said how much they appreciate OMA's service.

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!

July 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	74	6	0	5	12		28		\$700.00
Texas Oncology Central	42	0	0	2	8		8	6	
Texas Oncology North	36	0	0	3	8		10	6	\$20.00
Texas Oncology Round Rock	18	0	0	2	7		8	3.5	\$20.00
Texas Oncology South	31	2	0	3	5	1	9	3	\$5.00
New Braunfels Comprehensive Cancer Center	16	4	11	2	8		8	10.5	
Texas Oncology Sammons Cancer Center, Dallas	64	1	0	4	13		16	11.5	
Mary Crowley Cancer Research Ctr @ Medical City, Dallas	8	0	0	1	2		4	0	
North Cypress Cancer Center	15	4	0	1		5	4	6	
Total	304	17	11	23	63	6	95	46.5	\$745.00

August 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	79	9	2	5	17		31.75		\$793.75
Texas Oncology Central	22	1	0	2	6		8	0.5	
Texas Oncology North	38	6	0	3	7		10	3.75	
Texas Oncology Round Rock	37	11	4	2	5		5.5	11.5	
Texas Oncology South	50	0	0	3	3	7	11.5	8	\$9.00
New Braunfels Comprehensive Cancer Center	19	4	4	2	6		8	4	\$20.00
Texas Oncology Sammons Cancer Center, Dallas	48	0	0	3	10		12	8	
Mary Crowley Cancer Research Ctr @ Medical City - Dallas	8	0	0	1	2		4		
North Cypress Cancer Center	10	4	0	1	0	4	4	4	
Total	311	35	10	22	56	11	94.75	39.75	\$822.75

September 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	58	9	0	4	13		27		\$675.00
Texas Oncology Central	20	0	0	2	5		8	1	
Texas Oncology North	38	1	1	3	8		11.5	4	\$10.00
Texas Oncology Round Rock	34	0	0	3	9		9.5	6.5	\$37.00
Texas Oncology South	22	0	0	3	2	4	9.5	2	
New Braunfels Comprehensive Cancer Center	20	6	1	2	6		8	4	
Texas Oncology - Sammons Cancer Center, Dallas	46	0	0	4	10		14.5	4	
Mary Crowley Cancer Research Ctr @ Medical City - Dallas	5	0	0	1	1		2		
North Cypress Cancer Center	4	6	0	1	0	5	4	6	
Total	247	22	2	23	54	9	94	27.5	\$722.00