

Oncology Massage Alliance
October/November/December 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 in Austin at Texas Oncology - Midtown, Central, North, Round Rock, South and Sammons Center in Dallas. 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. In November, we added a new location, Austin Cancer Center. Currently we have one therapist going there.
- We added three new therapists, Marita Terese Peppard, Martha Iglehart, and Lauren Palmour. Lauren is at TO South, and Marita is at TO Round Rock.
- On October 15, Education Outreach Subcommittee member Madeline Brock gave a presentation about OMA to the physicians at Texas Oncology South.
- Texas Oncology Round Rock had a chair massage event for their staff in October. Two OMA massage therapists provided the massages.
- OMA partnered with the restaurant/brewpub NXNW during their Oktoberfest event October 25-26. OMA shared a table with the Breast Cancer Research Center, and was one of the benefitting charities during the event, and we received a check for \$1,000.
- In November we had a series of successful board and OMA events. On the 15th, we had our first Board Retreat; on the 16th, we had a meeting with the massage therapists, and on the 18th, we held our first Caregiver Workshop. Executive Director Gail Bailey travelled from Oregon to be here for these events. This was an opportunity for the therapists to meet Gail.
- OMA collaborated with Texas Oncology Round Rock and Midtown to host a meeting entitled, "Partners in Caring and Healing: A Workshop for Caregivers and People Living with Cancer." This free workshop was based upon Tracy Walton's DVD, "Touch, Caring and Cancer," which showed simple massage techniques for comfort and relaxation that cancer patients and their caregivers could learn and apply. Texas Oncology provided food and refreshments and OMA gave each couple a copy of the DVD for them to use at home. This interactive workshop, guided by OMA's MTs, was well-received, and we look forward to presenting this type of workshop again.
- OMA was represented by Geri Ruane at the 2014 ESCAPE (Encouraging and Sustaining Cancer Advocacy Programs and Efforts) Cancer Advocacy Leadership Conference that took place at the Miraval Resort & Spa in Tucson, Arizona. This four-day retreat brought together advocates from around the country who are involved in cancer-related programs and projects.
- OMA Therapists Gail Bailey, Geri Ruane and Robin Ryece had an opportunity to meet with Cindy Fitchpatrick, Psychosocial Program Coordinator at the Children's Blood and Cancer Center at Dell Children's Hospital in November about the possibility of having OMA represented in their clinic.
- In Dec, Texas Oncology Central held another holiday chair massage event for its staff, thanks to Dr. Debra Patt. This is the third year that TOC has given the gift of massage to its staff!
- OMA joined the Amazon Smile program, which is another way to raise funds for OMA.
- OMA Operations Committee and Lead Therapists met Oct 12th, and the Operations Committee met Dec. 14th.

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 approached a patient who was unsure about massage due to peripheral neuropathy in her feet. I explained the gentle pressure that would be used during the massage (level 1) and she agreed. She loved the massage and said the burning sensation was gone. She plans to ask her doctor about massage.

I massaged a male patient in his 50's. He's a repeat client. He has chemotherapy induced peripheral neuropathy in his feet and hands. I used Walton pressure level 1-2, performed modified CIPN protocol. He states, "This massage is the main reason I come here! The chemo is just a side dish!"

I gave a foot massage to a female patient in her 60's. She does not have peripheral neuropathy, and her skin looks great. She said she took a few weeks off from chemo because she was not feeling well. I worked on her toes, bottom and soles of her feet. After the massage she gave me a big hug and held my hand to say, "Thank you." She also said, "You bring joy and happiness to everybody. You are an angel."

I massaged the hands of a female patient in her 50's, using Level 1 pressure. She was experiencing tingling in her hands. She mentioned that last week after her hand massage the tingling subsided for about 2 days. She was looking forward to her hand massage again this week.

The patient was a male in his early 20's. His feet were sore from dancing this past weekend. He was happy to see me. A wave of nausea was starting, and he said the massage helped calm it. He relaxed considerably and was very appreciative.

I massaged a male patient in his 40's with severe Chemo Induced Peripheral Neuropathy. He was hospitalized last week, and was still very weak. I used modified CIPN protocol on hand and feet. He said, "You have no idea how much this helps."

I gave a massage to a female client in her 70's. Today was her last day of chemo. Her skin is still dry, but she looks better and has more energy. I worked on her feet with pressure scale holding and 1. Her husband said, "This is the best service. Everybody needs this."

I massaged a woman in her 60's. She said she was ready to rest but spent the whole massage talking about cancer and end of life decisions and preparations. She is in her final 6 months, but not in hospice at this time. At the end of the massage, she said, "This feels just fabulous! God bless you!"

The nurse asked if I would give a woman getting her first chemo treatment a massage. She was a little anxious about today, and the nurse thought a massage would help her relax. The patient was quiet, and closed her eyes during the session. She thanked me at the end and said that she felt relaxed.

I massaged a caregiver in her 50's. She had surgery to fuse 2 vertebrae in her neck last year. This was the first time she has had someone touch her neck since. I used pressure 1-2. She enjoyed the massage and said that she felt much better after.

A male patient, aged 70-75, hesitantly accepted a foot massage. He had never received a massage before. During the intake, I asked if he had had any lymph nodes removed or radiated. He said yes and pointed to his neck, and said "56 nodes removed from here." This was an opportunity to educate the patient, and let him know about the lymphedema clinic here. He was very grateful for the massage and the information.

A female patient in her 60's was happy to receive a hand massage. She has neuropathy in her hands and feet (mainly hands), which affects her quality of life. Her daughter and son-in-law were with her and glad that I could give her a gentle massage. She said, "I can't feel your touch, but my hands and fingers have more sensation and they feel so much better. I can actually move them!" When I massaged her right hand, she said, "Wow! This feels like Christmas! I love it!" She closed her eyes for a short while and had a smile on her face. She was very appreciative, along with her family members.

It was a patient's first chemo session, and was somewhat anxious. He didn't have pain in his feet, but was surprised at how much tension was released from his entire body as I did a foot massage. He was very appreciative.

I gave a foot massage to a female patient in her 50's. She has been receiving low doses of chemotherapy every week for several months. I offered her a massage several times, and she always said, "I can't get massage." Her skin was very fragile and thin so she was very careful about protecting it. I just said hi to her as I walked by, and today she said, "I'll try." I started foot massage with pressure scale level 1. She said she can take more pressure so I used level 2 on a few spots on her feet. She opened up and talked to me more than ever. I was very pleased to see her smile!

I worked on a female patient in her 60's. She's a repeat client. She has Chemotherapy Induced Peripheral Neuropathy in her fingers and feet. I used Walton pressure level 1 and 2, performed modified CIPN protocol. She said, "I can feel my whole body relax and remember to breathe."

I massaged the feet of a female patient in her 60's using level 1 pressure. The patient had never had a foot massage before and exclaimed when I was finished, "This feels so good! Now I see what I have been missing!" The patient really enjoyed the massage.

A female client in her 70's said she'll pass on the massage. However, after seeing OMA's card she decided to try hand massage. She said she usually doesn't massage because it's always too deep. She really liked the gentle pressure. She said thank you many times after the massage.

A male patient in his 60's stopped me and asked if massage would help the peripheral neuropathy in his feet. I explained that many find temporary relief from PN with massage. He was eager to give it a try. I did holds and level 1, light massage. He leaned back and relaxed throughout the massage. After, he thanked me and said it helped a lot.

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 (2 hours per week) 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 last 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. 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!

October 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
Texas Oncology Midtown	44	4	3	3	10		19.5	
Texas Oncology Central	83	2	3	4	10		10	10
Texas Oncology North	22	6	0	2	6		4	7
Texas Oncology Round Rock	34	1	0	3	8		8	4.5
Texas Oncology South	117	2	0	4	18		18	21.75
Texas Oncology Sammons Cancer Center, Dallas	48	2	1	2	9		8	10
Total	348	17	7	18	61	0	67.5	53.25

November 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
Texas Oncology Midtown	27	2	3	3	7		14.25	
Texas Oncology Central	72	0	0	4	10		10	10
Texas Oncology North	10	3	0	2	3		4	1
Texas Oncology Round Rock	25	0	0	3	6		8	7.5
Texas Oncology South	40	0	2	4	7		10	6
Texas Oncology Sammons Cancer Center, Dallas	36	1	0	2	8		8	8
Total	210	6	5	18	41	0	54.25	32.5

December 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
Texas Oncology Midtown	38	3	3	3	10		18.5	
Texas Oncology Central	60	4	5	4	11		4	18
Texas Oncology North	11	5	0	1	4		4	2
Texas Oncology Round Rock	51	3	0	4	10		8	11.75
Texas Oncology South	38	0	0	2	8		8	8
Austin Cancer Center	19	2	0	1	4			7.5
Texas Oncology Sammons Cancer Center, Dallas	55	0	0	2	10		8	12
Total	272	17	8	17	57	0	50.5	59.25