

Oncology Massage Alliance
October/November/December 2019

Infusion Room and Radiation Room Report Oncology Massage Program



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A L L I A N C E

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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;
 - Houston at North Cypress Cancer Center; and
 - Austin Cancer Center North, and Round Rock.
- OMA therapists are fully funded in the Austin, Dallas, Houston and Oregon locations thanks to funding from the facilities and local donors.
- Clare Landy, Lead Massage Therapist at TO South, will be stepping down, and will be relocating to her home in Sydney, Australia. Megan Moten, MT, will be taking her place.
- The OMA Board met on Saturday, November 9 for their Annual Board Retreat. After an all day retreat, the Board and more than a dozen OMA Therapists (from Dallas and Oregon) had dinner at Bazille, a restaurant inside Nordstrom at the Domain. It was a great way for the board members and massage therapists to meet one another and share their OMA stories and experiences. Everyone agreed that this dinner gathering should continue next year as well.
- The Annual Massage Therapist meeting was held Sunday, November 10 at Shady Hollow Community Center in south Austin. Approximately fifteen massage therapists had a chance to learn more about "compassion fatigue" from a Massage Therapy Instructor and also receive 3 CE credits. She identified specific tools to help us manage physical and emotional demands from our work and also shared effective ways to prevent, or to manage, compassion fatigue and burnout.
- The OMA Operations Committee met on Tuesday, October 15th.
- The SPARK newsletter, issue 6, was distributed on December 30th.

Infusion and Radiation 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 female caregiver in her 60's had pain in her thumbs and forearms and asked for a massage to help her with the pain. I massaged her hands and forearms. She was able to move her hands much more freely after the massage. "There is much less pain in my hands and arms now. Thank you!"

A female patient in her 70's was very talkative during her massage. She said she recently got over her 'private pity party' over her chemotherapy and decided to open up to connect with others to give and receive support for her therapy. We talked about our families, children and the vacations we have been on and the places we have visited. "This was a wonderful massage. Thank you so much for the conversation!"

A female in her 60's was suffering from severe edema in her legs and feet. She said she was told it was a possible side effect from the meds she's taking. She has an appointment with the Dr. to assess today. I held her lower legs and feet with <1 level strokes. She said, "I'm in heaven!" She was very thankful for a moment of relief.

Today was a female patient's first day in the infusion room. She said that it was a long first day. She was a bit anxious, not knowing what to expect. She appreciated the gentle foot massage and our conversations, which helped relieve some of the anxiety that she was feeling. She was glad to be able to talk!

I massaged a female patient. She is a repeat client, and swears by her weekly foot massages. She dozes and smiles throughout. She expresses much gratitude to OMA.

I massaged a female patient in her 70's. She is a repeat client who says the foot massages really decreased her neuropathy. She is just thrilled. She also says it gives her an opportunity to talk and talk, which helps her manage her anxiety.

A male patient in his 40's said, "I've never had a massage before, and that was an amazing feeling. The numbness went away and it was so relaxing. Thank you."

A female patient who I see every week said, "Yay! It's spa day!"

I massaged a new patient. She was very quiet at first, and I noticed she was quietly crying. I asked her if she wanted to talk, and she said her daughter died three days ago, and she still couldn't believe it. We talked quietly for a few minutes and she thanked me for the massage and the conversation.

A female patient in her 60's wanted a foot massage, but she was cold (very cool temperature in the infusion room). I explained that she could keep her socks on while I rubbed her feet and she was happy to hear that! As I massaged her feet, she closed her eyes and was able to relax. Her husband watched me and was glad to see his wife's stress reduce a bit. He smiled and thanked me.

A patient in his 80's was getting his treatment started. I asked his nurse if it was ok to continue, and she said yes. He said it helped distract him from what was going on. "A good distraction!"

A 60 year old female patient was having restless leg after getting benadryl. She was uncomfortable, and asked the nurse to find me. She calmed as I worked on her legs and then her feet. She was very thankful for the relief.

A 55 year old female patient was having her second chemo treatment. She was happily surprised that massage was offered. She said it was a good distraction while getting shots and having her IV inserted. She hopes to get more massages in the future.

A patient in his 60's was excited to see me come down the aisle to work on his feet. He already had his shoes kicked off. He was having some issues with his left toe, as it was inflamed, so I did gentle holding on this specific toe, and did Level 1 on the rest of his feet.

A male patient in his 60's said that this was his first chemotherapy session. He has an enlarged spleen and liver and found that massage helped him to relax. It also helped with his swollen left leg and foot. We discussed oncology massage and his conditions and the precautions to take to avoid edema. "Thank you for the massage. I appreciate the service you provide."

A female patient was fatigued and had neuropathy on the tops and bottoms of her feet. She was able to close her eyes during her massage and relax while reclining in her chair. "Thanks so much for the massage. It really helped!"

A female patient in her 80's had an issue with her left hand along the top of radius, saying it was sensitive. She loved the massage, and said to bless our organization for putting such good things out into the world.

A female patient asked to be careful since she is experiencing tingling and needles, pain, and numbness in her feet, but would really like a massage. I used holding and Level 1, and I worked over her socks. After the session, she noticed her discomfort was not as intense. She wishes for this daily!

A patient was having pain when the nurse put in her IV. I held her hand during the IV placement. She said, "I was glad you were here and massaging my hand during the IV. It helped me to relax."

A 50 year old patient was very restless and frustrated because her legs and arms were restless as a result of the meds she was getting and she couldn't relax. She kept jumping and moving during the massage at first, but then began to calm down and started snoring. Her friend looked at me with a thumbs up, and said, "You did it!"

I gave a foot massage to a male patient in his 70's. He kept thanking me and saying, "You don't know how good this feels! Thank you!!"

This was the first massage for this patient, even though she has been here awhile. She really enjoyed it and was surprised to say she felt like taking a nap now - she'd been anxious before. Thanked me.

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!

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	Donations
Central TX									
Texas Oncology Midtown	58	1	0	3	11	0	24		\$600.00
Texas Oncology Central	27	1	0	2	6	0	13		\$234.00
Texas Oncology North	31	0	0	2	8	0	15.5		\$279.00
Texas Oncology Round Rock	42	0	0	3	10	0	19		\$362.00
Texas Oncology South	23	2	0	1	5	0	9		\$192.00
Austin Cancer Center - North	3	0	0	1	2	0	2		\$50.00
Austin Cancer Center - Round Rock	15	1	0	1	4	0	8		\$207.00
Dallas									
Texas Oncology Sammons Cancer Center	89	0	0	2	20	0	40		\$1070.00
Houston									
North Cypress Cancer Center	7	2	0	1	4	4	8		\$200.00
Total	295	7	0	16	70	4	138.5	0	\$3194.00

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	Donations
Central TX									
Texas Oncology Midtown	20	1	0	2	6	0	8.25		\$206.25
Texas Oncology Central	21	1	0	2	6	0	11.75		\$236.50
Texas Oncology North	20	0	2	2	6	0	10.5		\$213.00
Texas Oncology Round Rock	36	0	0	4	9	0	19.5		\$391.00
Texas Oncology South	13	0	0	1	2	0	4		\$112.00
Austin Cancer Center - North	6	0	0	1	3	0	5.25		\$141.25
Austin Cancer Center - Round Rock	4	0	0	1	2	0	4		\$100.00
Dallas									
Texas Oncology Sammons Cancer Center	64	0	20	4	16 IR/ 3 Chair massage	0	32 IR/8 Chair massage		\$1025.00
Houston									
North Cypress Cancer Center	0	0	0	1	4	4	4		\$100.00
Total	184	2	22	18	57	4	107.25	0	\$2525.00

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	Donations
Central TX									
Texas Oncology Midtown	32	1	0	3	8	0	15.5		\$387.50
Texas Oncology Central	22	0	0	2	6	0	13		\$234.00
Texas Oncology North	27	1	0	3	7	0	14.5		\$286.00
Texas Oncology Round Rock	21	0	0	3	6	0	12		\$236.00
Texas Oncology South	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		\$0.00
Austin Cancer Center - North	7	1	0	1	4	0	7		\$175.00
Austin Cancer Center - Round Rock	4	0	0	1	2	0	4		\$102.00
Dallas									
Texas Oncology Sammons Cancer Center	55	0	2	2	13	0	26		\$690.00
Houston									
North Cypress Cancer Center	14	3	0	1	7	7	13		\$325.00
Total	182	6	2	16	53	7	105	0	\$2435.50