

Hands On!

THE JOURNAL FOR MASSAGE THERAPY STUDENTS

AUTUMN 2013

**Research at the Alfred:
Massage therapy for
cardiac surgery patients**

Meet students involved in the research

Standards of Practice

Case Study Contest – Make your mark!

Hands On! is your journal!



Welcome to new students of massage therapy and welcome back to those of you continuing with your studies in 2013. For those of you who are new, *Hands On!* is here to provide you with up-to-date industry information and news.

You have chosen to study towards a hugely rewarding profession. Helping people in wellness is immensely satisfying. Studying requires discipline and requires you, as a student, to form good habits from the beginning. Taking good care of yourself will give you the best chance at academic success and allow you to take care of others.

In this issue we feature the research study undertaken by Lisa Casanelia and her Endeavour College students at the Alfred Hospital. Research is an important area for massage therapy and needs to be continually developed to support our

claims of the benefits of massage to clients. To understand research methodologies, to develop academic writing skills, to be able to critique research papers and to partake in research studies will better position you as a massage therapy graduate in the health arena. AAMT and Aon's Case Study Contest is currently open, and provides students with the opportunity to do just this (find eligibility details on page 8).

The jury is still out on whether a higher level of education for massage therapists is required. Does advancing your knowledge make a difference? Will it make you a better therapist? Will having an Advanced Diploma or Degree have clients flocking to your door? What do you think? Send your thoughts to handson@aamt.com.au.

Evidence-Based Practice is also the theme of the **AAMT National Conference** in Adelaide. The Conference provides opportunities to network and to discuss such moot points as the virtues, or not, of further education. You'll find more details on page 6. It would be great to see you all there!

In support of **Massage Therapy Week's** sport theme, we've included two graduate profiles, focusing on this specialised area. Anthony Kaleel is based in Sydney, a family man, running a successful massage business, who still

grabs the opportunities that present to him in the sporting arena. Georgina Tzanavaras demonstrates her business acumen with the inclusion of adjunct modalities to boost her business and provide further services to her clients.

Men's Health Week needs your support. Make sure you take care of the men in your life. There are great articles on the web in relation to this. See the noticeboard on page 6 for a link to get you started.

Massage therapists cannot ignore their communities. It's what we do - help our communities. The article from Carla Coogan about helping out with a fundraiser for people affected by the recent bushfires in Tasmania is a reminder of the great work that can be done to contribute towards helping our own local communities.

And finally, a big thank you to our sponsors: AON, Firm n Fold and Melrose. Without your support, AAMT could not provide this magazine to the students of massage therapy.

Never stop learning - knowledge is power. Wishing you all the best for your studies in 2013.

"Education is the kindling of a flame, not the filling of a vessel" - SOCRATES.

Sue Gillespie
BHS (Massage & NMT)
Editor



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Massage therapy for cardiac surgery patients – a randomised trial at the Alfred Hospital

Q Where did the idea for a randomised study on cardiothoracic patients originate?

The idea came from Dr Lesley Braun, as a result of her PhD thesis results which indicated that cardiac surgery patients sought access to massage therapy within the hospital setting. A systematic literature search revealed that several previous massage therapy studies had been conducted with cardiac surgery patients at major US hospitals, but the benefit of the treatment was inconclusive. After a visit in 2008 by Professor Frank Rosenfeldt and Dr Lesley Braun to the Mayo Clinic in Rochester USA, it was concluded that a "decider" study could be conducted at the Alfred Hospital.

Q How did Endeavour College become involved with the study?

I approached the AAMT at the end of 2008 to express interest in being involved in a research project. This happened to coincide with contact Dr Lesley Braun had made with the AAMT about the proposed study. With the support of Endeavour's Director of Education at the time, Dr Nicholas Vardaxis, we met with the research team to discuss the study, establish the massage protocol and determine arrangements for supporting the study with trained student therapists.

Q How did you go about involving students in the study?

The research team faced difficulty in finding therapists to administer the massage to participants in the study. This provided Endeavour College with the opportunity to step in and establish a mutually beneficial arrangement for our students and the research team. A hand-picked group of third year MST students and diploma graduates were selected to be part of the small group of therapists involved in the study. This experience provided students with the unique opportunity to learn about surgical patients and deliver care in a public hospital as part of a collaborative healthcare team. They also gained valuable experience in working in a large clinical trial and in implementing massage within the confines of the research protocol.

Q How did you determine the massage protocol for the study?

I needed to be guided by all the experts in the area of cardiothoracics as this was completely new to me. I spent time on the ward getting to know how patients presented at different stages of recovery. It was also necessary to learn about the surgical incisions, the medical devices

patients were attached to, the limitations and restrictions of movement, and to identify any contraindications and recognise symptoms that may present during treatment. The final step was to try out massage on a range of patients to gauge their responses. This was quite daunting at first, as the patients seemed so fragile and vulnerable, but thankfully, their responses were overwhelmingly positive and they were very willing participants.

From this experience it was evident that a "recipe" approach would not be realistic or representative of how massage would be applied in a real clinical environment. In particular, the areas to be massaged and the position the client was resting would need to be individualised as would the pressure applied. A similar study conducted on cardiac patients (Albert, 2009), had outcomes that did not yield therapeutic benefits. This may have been due to the prescriptive nature of their massage protocol which required a number of position changes for the patient. My initial investigations of this patient group found that position changes for patients with a sternal wound generally caused pain and anxiety. As a result, we aimed to minimise these influences and kept patients in a position they were most comfortable. It took a great deal of consideration to establish a massage protocol that would be best suited to this patient group and the study objectives.

Q What were the strengths and limitations of the study?

Strengths:

- The enrolment of patients into this study was really easy as the idea of receiving several massages seemed like a good option for most patients.
- Randomisation of participants added strength to study results through elimination of any systematic bias between the two study groups.

Limitations:

- We were unable to come up with placebo for massage so the comparator group had quiet time instead.
- It was not possible to double blind the trial (patients always knew they were receiving a massage and therapists always knew they were giving one) so there is always the potential for bias in results.

Q What difficulties did you face?

Becoming comfortable with the hospital environment was a key aspect of making this whole study work so well. To assist us we worked closely with a research assistant, Cathy Reardon, whose experience and knowledge of the cardiothoracic ward was invaluable. She



Lisa Casanelia, Senior Lecturer - Remedial Therapies, Endeavour College of Natural Health

helped to integrate us onto the ward and educate us about the patients and their typical presentations.

Q Was the study a success?

This was the first large randomised study utilising massage therapy in an Australian hospital. The results showed significant patient benefits, feasibility of treatment delivery and acceptance by staff. This landmark study was accepted for publication in one of the most prestigious cardiac surgery journals internationally and was the impetus for the first massage therapy program for inpatients in a public hospital in Australia.

The massage therapy program successfully delivered treatment to cardiothoracic inpatients and provided significant benefits to public hospital patients experiencing pain, anxiety and muscle tension after major cardiac surgery. In addition, it allowed hospital staff to observe first-hand the benefits of the therapy for their patients. We received 91 referrals from physiotherapy and nursing to patients outside of the study during our time on the ward. Most of these patients were heart failure and heart transplant patients that weren't eligible for the study. These referrals were a great testament to the value the staff placed on the benefits of massage to their patients.

Lesley Braun, Catherine Stanguts, Lisa Casanelia, Ondine Spitzer, Eldho Paul, Nicholas J. Vardaxis, and Franklin Rosenfeldt.

Massage therapy for cardiac surgery patients—a randomized trial

J. Thorac. Cardiovasc. Surg., December 2012; 144: 1453 - 1459 e1.

Student profiles

Students involved with the research at the Alfred talk about how they became involved in the study and their experiences working with the patients there.

Melissa Tyrrell

Diploma of Remedial Massage,
Endeavour College of Natural Health

Q ■ What first interested you in enrolling into the Diploma of Remedial Massage?

I completed the Cert IV course to pass the time and as a compliment to a reflexology course I was planning on completing, but found I had a real passion for helping people through massage and wanted to support people with more complex conditions.



Q ■ You were an integral part of the research team for over 12 months: what stimulated you to join the research team and what did you learn from this experience?

I'm always interested in new experiences and have had personal experiences with relatives in hospital for major operations. I wanted to help from both a professional point of view - to see how massage could be adapted to such a situation - and from a personal view of possibly being able to help family or friends if they ever face that situation.

Q ■ Working in a hospital environment can be a challenging experience, how did you manage this and what did you learn?

I just told myself to breathe, that these were people with full lives, friends and family, not just bodies with tubes and machines attached to them. It was hard at first, and never really got easy, but it was worth it when our efforts were so obviously appreciated.

Q ■ Has this experience changed you as a therapist and influenced you in any way with regard to your current practice?

Definitely. I felt a lot more confident and comfortable when working with my regular clientele. It made me realise how massage can help such a wide variety of the population and even small changes can be significant.

Raelene Trigg

BHSc Musculoskeletal Therapy, Endeavour College of Natural Health

Q ■ What first interested you in enrolling in BHSc (MST) and why did you decide to study at degree level?

Throughout my latter years of high school, I was always fascinated by the human mind and body. I didn't have a specific direction for further study in mind, although I did have a real interest in a branch of psychology in the UK called Human Givens. As I wasn't prepared to move to the UK to study right after finishing year 12, I decided to look for a degree that worked with the human body. I really liked the idea of having a thorough understanding of the human body, which I could then mesh with the psychology if I studied it in the future, as the two are very closely woven. While looking for a degree program, I came across the Bachelor for Health Science in Musculoskeletal Therapy at Endeavour College for Natural Health (then ACNM). I loved the idea of the smaller class sizes with more one-on-one time with lecturers and the student clinic, and receiving a scholarship made it an easy decision! After starting the degree I realised I had found an area of study that I loved, and I haven't looked back since!

Q ■ You were an integral part of the research team for over 12 months, what did you learn from this experience?

I learned a great deal from this experience! I learned that often the undivided attention, time given and conversation had, is just as beneficial to the patient as the physical therapy you are providing. I saw firsthand, over and over again, that the physical treatment given has many measurable effects on the rest of the body other than the patient feeling "good". I learned that being gentle in your approach is just as powerful and effective as a more forceful approach. In this environment, I learned to have confidence in the treatment I was providing and the effects that it had.

Q ■ Working in a hospital environment can be a challenging experience, how did you manage this and what did you learn?

I thought I would have more difficulty with this than I actually ended up having. The surgical incisions, stitches and dressings I found to be a little confronting, and the huge variety of

machines and tubes and beeping noises was quite intimidating to start with. The team we worked with and the nurses on the ward were all extremely helpful, and any emergency situations were handled rapidly by the doctors and nurses on the ward. I found that the best help for dealing with the challenges and confronting aspects of the hospital was the patients themselves. Getting to know each patient as an individual and listening to their stories really put the surgical procedures and hospital environment into perspective and made the ward a really enjoyable and rewarding place to work.

Q ■ Has this experience changed you as a therapist and influenced you in any way with regard to your current postgraduate studies?

My experience on the Cardiothoracic Ward at the Alfred Hospital has definitely had a major influence on my current postgrad studies. I am commencing a Master of Clinical Exercise Physiology and Rehabilitation, of which a big part is cardiorespiratory rehabilitation. I feel as though the time I spent on the research program and tutoring at the Alfred has had the biggest impact on my approach as a therapist so far, especially regarding the way I interact with clients and the treatment techniques I use. I am extremely grateful for the whole experience and the growth I gained from it, and feel honoured to have had the opportunity to tutor other students so that they could also experience all that the hospital environment has to offer.



Graduate inspirations

Graduates talk about their experiences in the field - in support of Massage Therapy Week's sport theme, two graduates working in this specialised area share their knowledge and talk about their work in the industry.

Anthony Kaleel, NSW

I am Anthony Kaleel, 35 years of age, married with two boys and with a girl on the way. A fitness professional since 1997, I viewed soft tissue health as an integral part of living a healthy lifestyle. With many of my clients being referred to other health professionals, I saw the potential in learning a new trade that could provide an adjunct service to my clients, improve earning potential and increase my knowledge and skills in working with the human body. In 2005, I graduated with a Diploma of Remedial Massage from TAFE NSW (Loftus campus).

Soon after graduating, I worked at the Sydney Sports Medicine Centre. Opportunities to work in sport presented and included Sydney FC in their inaugural A-League season, 2005 and 2006 National Weightlifting Championships, and with the 2006 Australian Commonwealth Games Weightlifting Team prior to the Melbourne Games. I have also worked with Athletics Australia, The Heart Foundation, the 2008 Australian Golf Open and the 2012 GIO Sydney International Wheelchair Tennis Open. In 2010, Georgette Stephens (Olympic and Commonwealth Games massage therapist) and I established Sydney Elite Massage Therapy. The business contracts ten massage therapists to work in our clinics, in corporate massage and at sporting events. Due to the success of the business we plan to open another clinic within the next 12 months.

These days, with a growing family and the



business, travelling to sporting events is difficult, so the opportunity to work at the APIA Sydney International (pre-Australian Open) with the WTA Tour (Women's Professional Tennis Tour) was not to be missed.

I worked alongside the WTA sport sciences and medicine team, consisting of three international physiotherapists and an experienced massage therapist. The event was professionally handled by this sport medicine team. It was fascinating to observe the pressure they were under throughout the event and it was great to see how well the team resolved issues for their well-tuned athletes. To be involved in, and to witness, the precision of taping, sports nutrition education and the systems applied to controlling body temperature was an eye opening experience. I learned a lot. It's one of the things I love about this business - you never stop learning. I hope I can be involved again next year.

Throughout my career I have learned that relationships are important. My message is: "Learn from the negative experiences - they help you to focus and become determined to succeed. Never discount the magnitude a positive relationship can have on your individual success, and the effect and growth it can have on your business".

Georgia Tzanavaras, SA

Hello, my name is Georgia Tzanavaras. I have a Bachelor in Sports Science and Physical Education and I am a registered primary school teacher. My passion in exercise and movement led me to complete a Master Trainer qualification with the Australian Institute of Fitness (AIF) and a Level 2 Pilates practitioner course (APMA). I am a Club Professional Tennis Coach accredited with

Tennis Australia and I have also recently completed my Diploma in Remedial Massage Therapy (ACM).

From a very young age I was involved with sports and I played professional volleyball and tennis at a national level in my country of birth. My passion in 'mind and body balance' drove me to study all my life, the science of movement and the discipline that it requires.

I thoroughly enjoy helping people to optimise their health potential in life and this is my driving force whilst practicing as a professional.

I have been very fortunate to establish a business in Renmark SA where I have registered as "Wellness Pilates". I practice Pilates and remedial massage and am making my first steps in Tai Chi. I have been very well supported by the local people who are looking for core strength and recovery through massage and Pilates.

Massage therapy combined with Pilates practice has rounded off my professional life. It has allowed me to achieve my clients' high expectation of wellbeing, something that has given me great joy!

I am very blessed to have a young family and a husband that is supporting me totally in my journey. I have found it very challenging at times to juggle a personal and professional life but having faith in my "passion" has helped me overcome difficult moments. I strongly believe that "Life is a journey not a destination".



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Standards of Practice for Massage Therapists

The Standards of Practice guidelines establish the expectation of professional conduct of massage therapists in reference to your clients, your colleagues, the general public and to yourself as a professional. Standards of Practice preserve and enhance professional reputation and protect the general public. They are not intended to, and could not possibly, provide easy answers, formulae or prescriptive solutions for the complex professional dilemmas encountered in clinical practice. The aim is to assist the professional massage therapist to evaluate, reflect on and adapt performance in their practice.

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MASSAGE INDUSTRY NOTICEBOARD

News, research, articles, study tools and more

Research & Articles

Here are some newly published articles in your area(s) of interest:

Dark Chocolate

The latest research on the effectiveness of consuming dark chocolate as a preventative therapy for high risk CV disease. Moderation, moderation, moderation! (BMJ)

More discussions about higher education levels

Research literacy for the new massage therapist – blog by Kat Mayerovitch

Massage Therapy Foundation: Another viewpoint - although not specifically massage therapy related

An editorial from The Lancet. "What is the purpose of medical research?" The Lancet, 381(9864), 347. doi:10.1016/S0140-6736(13)60149-X

Industry News

What's going on in the massage industry?

Men's Health Week – June 10-16, 2013

Get Involved: take care of the males in your life. How can you help? Run an event or join an existing one. Find out more here.

Massage Therapy Week – Sport

Tennis Anyone? For those of you avid tennis buffs, or sports-minded massage therapy students, the Society for Tennis Medicine and Science (STMS) October 2012 Journal offers interesting reading on "nutritional issues for the tennis player", and the continuing discussions on "dynamic stretching as a preference over static exercise as pre-competitive warm-up". Download the current STMS Journal here to read these articles and more.

WHAT'S ON!

Make your mark: 2013 Student Case Study Contest

Case Studies play an integral role in developing scientific literature for the massage profession and allied health professionals.

AAMT, with AON, offers an opportunity to Australian students to demonstrate their learning so far and to showcase their research skills and academic writing abilities.

AAMT invites students of massage, remedial massage and myotherapy to participate in the 2013 Student Case Study Contest. Under the National Conference Scholarship Scheme, AAMT will provide funding to support the contest winner attending and presenting their case study at the AAMT National Conference in 2013.

The prize includes travel and accommodation/conference registration expenses, including the conference dinner and clinical workshops to a maximum value of \$2,000. To find out more visit www.aamt.com.au.

Check out the American Massage Foundation Case Study Winner 2012.

CARLA COOGAN, TASMANIAN BUSHFIRE FUNDRAISER

Community work: giving back

My name is Carla Coogan, and I am currently studying to become a massage therapist with the Australian College of Massage in Tasmania.

On the 6th of January this year, I was asked by Pam Claxton (our local massage therapist) to join her in participating in a

community fundraiser for those who were affected by the devastating bush fires in southern Tasmania.

What an amazing experience! There were many fellow community members holding lots of wonderful events, and Pam and I were kept very, very busy under our

sunshade providing the public with hand, neck and shoulder massages. For me, it was a fantastic way to get more exposure and experience in my local area, and also a great way to get feedback on massage from the general public. I was very surprised at the amount of people who had never experienced massage before, and after a ten minute massage, were absolutely converted! We started at 2pm, and the line continued on until 5pm with people still wanting more.

For those who are studying to become a massage therapist, this is truly a wonderful way to build your confidence, become more familiar with your own techniques, and to provide your client with a wonderful experience.

I want to thank Pam for supporting me and inviting me to share in this fantastic opportunity.



Helping the community, Carla Coogan (pictured far right).

What's happening in your community?

There's a "Health Week" for you! Make the most of these opportunities to help out in your community. Check this website for more information.

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