



AMTA Position Statement Proposal Sample

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Date received by Delegate: 6/4/04

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Stress is a prevalent component in today's fast paced world which can negatively impact on an individual's health and well-being. Massage therapy has been shown to be a means by which stress can be reduced significantly on physical and psychological levels. While massage therapists know from experience that massage reduces stress, there is considerable research that validates our experience. In a study on the effect of trigger point therapy¹, there was a significant decrease in heart rate, systolic blood pressure⁸, and diastolic blood pressure⁸. Measures of oxygen consumption, blood pressure, and salivary cortisol levels were all lower after a 10 to 15 minute chair massage in controlled studies^{2, 3, 4}. Changes in psychological states have been measured by physiological responses^{1, 3}, the Perceived Stress Scale⁵, the POMS Depression Scale^{4,6}, and the Anxiety

State Scale⁴. In the attached studies, all subjects in the massage group showed significant changes in emotional states and stress levels.

RATIONALE:

Stress relief is one of the most important aspects of what we do as massage therapists. Our clients benefit from the measured and immeasurable elements of the structured touch of trained massage therapists. By supporting this important benefit of our work we are confirming the following core values of our Association:

- AMTA believes in the benefit of massage for all.
- Massage enhances the whole person.
- AMTA encourages members' professional and personal success and growth.

This position also addresses these primary goals of the AMTA.

- The public and health care communities understand the value of massage delivered by AMTA members as a regular part of one's life.
- Increase consumer preferences for massage delivered by AMTA members.

POSITION STATEMENT:

It is the position of the American Massage Therapy Association (AMTA) that Massage Therapy can be effective for stress relief.

REFERENCES: (Attach additional information if necessary)

1. Delaney, J.P., Leong, K.S., Watkins, A., & Brodie, D. (2002). The short-term effects of myofascial trigger point massage therapy on cardiac autonomic tone in healthy subjects. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 37, 364-71.
2. Boone, T., Tanner, M., & Radosevich, A. (2001). Effects of a 10-minute back rub on cardiovascular responses in healthy subjects. *American Journal of Chinese Medicine*. 29, 47-52

3. Cady, S. H., & Jones, G. E. (1997). Massage therapy as a workplace intervention for reduction of stress. *Perceptual & Motor Skills*, 84, 157-158.

4. Field, T., Ironson, G., Scafidi, F., Nawrocki, T., Goncalves, A., Burman, I., Pickens, J., Fox, N., Schanberg, S., & Kuhn, C. (1996). Massage therapy reduces anxiety and enhances EEG pattern of alertness and math computations. *International Journal of Neuroscience*, 86, 197-205

5. The effect of chair massage on stress perception of hospital bedside nurses. Abstract: MARY KAY BRENNAN, MS, RN, LMBT; DR. RITA D. DEBATE, PhD, MPH, CHES

6. Field, T., Quintino, O., Henteleff, T., Wells-Keife, L., & Delvecchio-Feinberg, G. (1997). Job stress reduction therapies. *Alternative Therapies in Health and Medicine*, 3, (4), 54-56.

A 10 minute chair massage can produce a relaxation response and thus reduce the stress responses of the body.

7. MacDonald, G. (1998). Massage offers respite for primary care givers. *The American Journal of Hospice & Palliative Care*, Jan/Feb, 43-47.

8. Cady, S. H. & Jones, G. E. (1997). Massage therapy as a workplace intervention for reduction of stress. *Perceptual & Motor Skills*, 84(1), 157-158.

Appendix: Abstracts (Can be set as attachment to proposal)

Appendix one:

The acute effects of myofascial trigger-point massage therapy on cardiac autonomic tone in healthy subjects.

Joe Delaney, FIBMS, PhD; King Sun Leong, BMed Sci, BMBS, MRCP, MD; Alan Watkins BSc, MBBS; David Brodie, BSc, MIBiol, PhD.

Aim: To investigate the effects of myofascial trigger-point massage therapy to the head, neck and shoulder areas on cardiac autonomic tone.

Background: No studies have reported on the effect of back massage on autonomic tone as measured by heart rate variability. This is especially relevant to the nursing profession, as massage is increasingly available as a therapy complementary to conventional nursing practice.

Design: An experimental study in which subjects were initially placed in age- and sex-matched groups and then randomized to treatment or control by alternate allocation.

Methods: The study involved 30 healthy subjects (16 female and 14 male, aged 32.5 ± 8.5 years). A five-minute cardiac inter-beat interval recording, systolic and diastolic blood pressure and subjective self-evaluations of muscle tension and emotional state were taken before and after intervention. Autonomic function was measured using time and frequency domain analysis of heart rate variability.

Results: Following myofascial trigger-point massage therapy, there was a significant decrease in heart rate ($P < 0.0001$), systolic blood pressure ($P < 0.02$) and diastolic blood pressure ($P < 0.01$). Analysis of heart rate variability revealed a significant increase in parasympathetic activity following myofascial trigger-point massage therapy. Both muscle tension and emotional state, showed significant improvement ($P > 0.001$).

Conclusion: In normal healthy subjects, myofascial trigger-point massage therapy to the head, neck and shoulder areas is effective in increasing cardiac parasympathetic activity and improving measures of relaxation.

Appendix two:

Boone, T., Tanner, M., & Radosevich, A. (2001). Effects of a 10-minute back rub on cardiovascular responses in healthy subjects. *American Journal of Chinese Medicine*, 29, 47-52

METHODS: This study determined the cardiovascular responses to a 10-minute back rub. Twelve healthy, college-age males and females volunteered to participate as subjects. The subjects were assessed for 10 minutes on a padded plinth lying on one side. During the treatment period, a back rub was administered. Oxygen consumption and cardiac output was determined.

RESULTS: The central and peripheral components of oxygen consumption were changed and cardiac output decreased. These results indicate that the back rub was

effective in inducing relaxation.

Appendix three:

Cady, S. H., & Jones, G. E. (1997). Massage therapy as a workplace intervention for reduction of stress. *Perceptual & Motor Skills*, 84, 157-158.

METHOD: The effectiveness of a 15-min. on-site massage while seated in a chair was evaluated for reducing stress as indicated by blood pressure. 52 employed participants' blood pressures were measured before and after a 15-min. massage at work. **RESULTS:** Analyses showed a significant reduction in participants' systolic and diastolic blood pressure after receiving the massage.

Appendix four:

Field, T., Ironson, G., Scafidi, F., Nawrocki, T., Goncalves, A., Burman, I., Pickens, J., Fox, N., Schanberg, S., & Kuhn, C. (1996). Massage therapy reduces anxiety and enhances EEG pattern of alertness and math computations. *International Journal of Neuroscience*, 86, 197-205.

METHOD: Twenty-six adults were given a chair massage and 24 control group adults were asked to relax in the massage chair for 15 minutes, two times per week for five weeks. On the first and last days of the study they were monitored for EEG before, during and after the sessions. In addition, before and after the sessions they performed math computations, they completed POMS Depression and State Anxiety Scales and they provided a saliva sample for cortisol. At the beginning of the sessions they completed Life Events, Job Stress and Chronic POMS Depression Scales. **RESULTS:** Analyses revealed the following: 1) frontal delta power increased for both groups, suggesting relaxation; 2) the massage group showed decreased frontal alpha and beta power (suggesting enhanced alertness), while the control group showed increased alpha and beta power; 3) the massage group showed increased speed and accuracy on math computations while the control group did not change; 4) anxiety levels were lower following the massage but not the control sessions, although mood state was less depressed following both the massage and control sessions; 5) salivary cortisol levels were lower following the massage but not the control sessions but only on the first day; and 6) at the end of the 5 week period

depression scores were lower for both groups but the job stress score was lower only for the massage group.

Appendix five:

The effect of chair massage on stress perception of hospital bedside nurses.

ABSTRACT

MARY KAY BRENNAN, MS, RN, LMBT

DR. RITA D. DEBATE, PhD, MPH, CHES

Context:

Studies have shown that hospital bedside nursing is a stressful occupation. Massage therapy has been shown to be an effective intervention in stress management.

Objective:

The goal of this study was to determine if a ten-minute on-site chair massage was more effective at reducing the stress perception of hospital bedside nurses than a ten-minute break.

Design:

Randomized trial with a control group, who took a ten-minute break, and a massage group, who received a 10-minute chair massage.

Setting:

A small suburban hospital on the maternity, medical-surgical, telemetry, and critical care nursing units.

Participants:

Eighty-two bedside nurses.

Main Outcome Measure:

Stress perception was assessed using the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) in an experimental pretest - posttest design and analyzed using t-tests for independent samples.

Results:

Stress perception was significantly lower in the massage group after the chair massage ($P < .05$) and not significantly changed in the control group.

Conclusion:

The results of this study support the effectiveness of chair massage in the reduction of stress perception for this population.

Further research is warranted to study the feasibility of providing chair massage on a regularly scheduled basis

on a nursing unit as well as its impact on other aspects of a nursing position, such as, job satisfaction, retention, absenteeism, injury, and worker's compensation claims. Additionally, it would be beneficial to study the effects of chair massage with individuals in other occupations that are identified as being high stress and burnout occupations.

Appendix six:

Field, T., Quintino, O., Henteleff, T., Wells-Keife, L., & Delvecchio-Feinberg, G. (1997). Job stress reduction therapies. *Alternative Therapies in Health and Medicine*, 3, (4), 54-56.

This study assessed the effects of massage therapy, music relaxation with visual imagery, muscle relaxation, and social support group sessions in 100 hospital employees using a within-subjects pre-post test design and by comparisons across groups. All of the interventions were found to be effective for reducing stress among the hospital employees. The study had two massage groups: one which received a 10 minute chair massage on the nursing unit, the other received a 10 minute chair massage in a designated room, called the Peace Corps room. The music relaxation group sat in the dimly lit Peace Corps room for 10 minutes listening to gentle music in a comfortable chair. The muscle relaxation with visual imagery therapy also lasted 10 minutes and consisted of progressive muscle relaxation with imagery of claming, peaceful scenes.

Measurement tools used were the State Anxiety Inventory (STAI) and the Profile of Mood States (POMS).

Appendix seven:

This physical and mental relief has been documented in a study involving the care givers of hospice patients in which 85% of the participants reported a decrease in both emotional and physical stress after receiving weekly or biweekly massage sessions (MacDonald, 1998).

MacDonald, G. (1998). Massage offers respite for primary care givers. *The American Journal of Hospice & Palliative Care*, Jan/Feb, 43-47.

Sample size was small: 13 caregivers of hospice patients. They received 75 minute sessions of Swedish massage and other techniques including shiatsu, Reiki, polarity, jostling, compression, myofascial release, trigger-point

therapy and gentle stretching. Sessions were offered weekly or biweekly. The average number of massages received was 6. A pre-post test format was used that measured emotional stress, physical stress, physical pain, and sleep difficulty. Results indicated that 85% reported a decrease in emotional and physical stress, physical pain was relieved for 77% of the subjects, and 54 % reported improved sleep.

Appendix eight:

A fifteen minute chair massage was found to reduce stress as indicated by a reduction of blood pressure (Cady & Jones, 1997)

Cady, S. H. & Jones, G. E. (1997). Massage therapy as a workplace intervention for reduction of stress. *Perceptual & Motor Skills*, 84(1), 157-158.

This study evaluated the effectiveness of a 15 minute on-site chair massage on reducing stress as indicated by blood pressure for 52 employees at work. There was no control group for this study. BP was measured before and after the massage sessions and analysis showed a significant reduction in both systolic and diastolic pressure after receiving the massage.