

==== *Making Strides With* =====

# HOSPITAL MASSAGE THERAPY

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Written by: Koni Sims, CLMT CSMT CLT  
Sponsored by Custom Craftworks



Patients Treated by Medical Massage



Many Treatable Conditions



Developing a Medical Massage Therapy Program



Commitment to Hospital Massage



Medicine, Massage & Working Together



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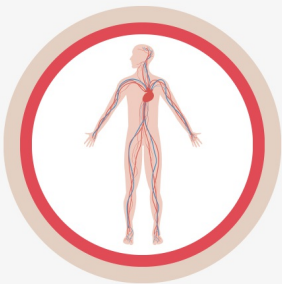
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## Introduction



As a massage therapist, it is very rewarding to work with clients, alleviating pain from conditions previously treated by a physician. The goal of massage therapists in the hospital is to:



Alleviate pain from conditions previously treated by a physician.



Evaluate and assess each client's condition



Improve each client's quality of life and decrease pain

It is common for potential clients to be unaware of what a massage therapist practicing in a hospital setting can do for them, as opposed to traditional massage in a spa setting.





## Working Together



It is extremely important to inform doctors and their staff about the possible conditions that are treatable by massage. Although important, it can be extremely challenging. Some physicians believe massage is still a "feel good" practice or a luxury. Others, including clients, believe there is no correlation between medical treatments and massage.

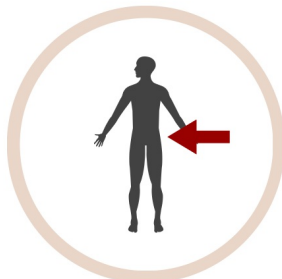
### Patients Treated by Medical Massage:

- ◆ Feel safe being treated at hospital; they know they will get a qualified therapist/body worker that can effectively treat his/her condition
- ◆ Don't have preference to techniques used to treat his/her condition; as long as they see results
- ◆ Patients will travel a distance to be treated- especially if already being treated at a hospital far from home

### Some of Many Treatable Conditions



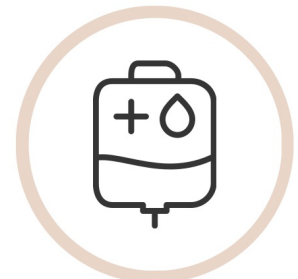
High blood pressure



Acute Low Back Pain



Pregnancy



Cancer/Oncology



## Developing a Medical Massage Therapy Program

To implement a medical massage therapy program, there is a lot that needs to be taken into consideration.

- ◆ Massage therapists with medical & hospital massage knowledge are ideal
- ◆ Integration with hospital policy is crucial for a successful program
- ◆ Program development with hospital management
- ◆ Massage therapists with medical & hospital massage knowledge are ideal
- ◆ Hiring of additional staff, developing therapy space and promoting the program

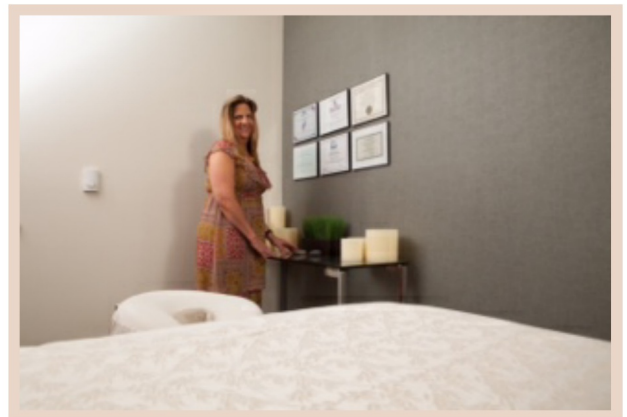


## Putting Together Your Massage Room

### Room

The larger the room, the better for performing medical massage therapy

- ◆ This allows for patients to comfortably move about the room; also storing wheelchairs and walkers
- ◆ Make sure the room is accompanied with its own thermostat; keeping temperature comfortable for each client is crucial



### OTHER ROOM ACCESSORIES



Lamp



Couch



Candles



Sink

## Table

The best kind of table to adequately suit hospital massage is an electric massage table

- ◆ Allows elevating and lowering of table for all patients
- ◆ Allows to accommodate for each technique
- ◆ These tables are typically more stable and durable



Hands Free Deluxe  
Therapy Lift Table



American Made  
McKenzie Deluxe



Hands Free Lift Back  
Therapy Lift Table

## OTHER TABLE ACCESSORIES



Solutions Triangle  
Wedge Bolster



Premium Cotton  
Flannel 3 Piece Sheet  
Set



Poly-Cotton Blend  
3 Piece Set



Face Rest Covers



Fleece Table  
Length Warming  
Pad



## Massage as a Necessity?



It is common for many health care professionals, including physicians, who are aware of medical massage to not refer their patients to medical massage therapists.

### Why not refer patients to a medical massage therapists?



Out of pocket expense;  
Insurance typically won't cover  
medical massage therapy



Medical Massage is still thought  
of as a "leisure activity"



Referring to a physical therapist-  
insurance usually will cover  
treatments

It is not uncommon for medical massage therapists to lose clients when insurance refused to pay for treatment. Always talk to your doctor before refusing medical massage treatment- you could get a doctor referral note and insurance may accept your submission!

## A Medical Massage Therapist:

- ◆ Works to educate the medical community about medical massage benefits
- ◆ Promote the understanding of how beneficial massage therapy and bodywork are to medicine
- ◆ Keeps up to date with techniques and continues to refresh with the basic anatomy and physiology



## Developing & Maintaining Skills

To become a massage therapist, one must take a program in specific training and focus on the anatomy and physiology of the human body. Medical massage may require additional training or shadowing before treating patients.



Kinesiology/  
Anatomy



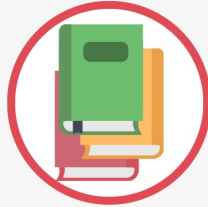
Pathology

Hospital massage is different from other settings and most often requires mentoring and hands-on experience from a current practicing therapist



## Continuing Education

Whether you are currently in a hospital setting, working in a spa or another practice setting, it is crucial to participate in furthering your education.



Hospital massage therapists often treat patients with conditions that cause great stress to patient, patient's family and therapist



Acute & Chronic  
Conditions



Pre/Post-Op



Diabetes



Depression



Oncology

When a hospital massage therapist is constantly treating such condition, it is important for the therapist to be open and deal with his/her own emotional circumstances just as well as the patient.



## Commitment to Hospital Massage

Hospital massage is available to the patients, staff and the public of hospitals. Patients feel that having their massage therapist practice in a hospital ensures safety, expert massage, and being located in a hospital with medical professionals lead to more of a sense of trust. Hospital massage also provides the opportunity for the massage therapist to work with physicians.



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"Offering massage therapy services as a complement to the medical care that a patient receives was a requirement and a necessity for the patients we serve in the Sanford Center for Health and Well-being. This modality has proven to decrease stress, anxiety and pain, increase mobility, decrease blood pressure and can provide comfort to assist in the healing process for patients undergoing medical care. The on-site service also offers a benefit to the health care of employees that will improve their overall well-being in the workplace."

- Director Lynn Thomas, RN BSN.

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## Medicine, Massage & Working Together

By incorporating massage into the hospital setting, massage therapists and other medical personnel can efficiently work together to give patients the best care and results. With combining the two, patients are sure to get the best care while relieving pain, finding comfort and minimizing symptoms.



## About the Author



### **Koni Sims, ACLMT, CSMT, CLT**

Koni graduated from SD School of Massage Therapy and received her Certified Sport Training from the Institute of Somatic Therapy. She then received her lymphedema technician certification through Blue Heron Academy of Healing Arts & Sciences. Koni developed the current hospital massage program at Sanford USD Medical Center, Sioux Falls, SD.