



Submitted by:

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Proposed Position Statement

It is the position of the American Massage Therapy Association (AMTA) that massage therapy may be beneficial for pediatric populations within the hospital setting.

Summary Rationale

AMTA has done a wonderful job identifying many populations that may benefit from massage. One major demographic group is conspicuous in its absence is the pediatrics. This group is typically identified as between 1 and 18 years of age. Although in situations involving childhood diseases (i.e. juvenile arthritis, cystic fibrosis, etc.) pediatric treatment protocols may extend into the client's 20's and 30's.

Pediatric populations with chronic conditions and complex medical needs often develop fear and anxiety surrounding their medical care—and they must cope with a variety of stressors, symptoms and side effects related to their illness and treatment. Facilitating healthy touch experiences within the medical system can help restore trust and teach children how to effectively express their needs, while improving the outcomes for pediatric patients.

The position statement aligns with the AMTA Core Value **“We affirm and promote the benefits of massage therapy as validated by research.”**

There is a growing body of research to support the benefits of massage for pediatric patients in physical, emotional and social aspects.

Aligns with the following vision statements and strategic objective

- **“Massage Therapy is a vital component of health care and wellness.”**
The use of massage therapy for easing chronic symptoms may prevent unnecessary medical treatments and lessen use of pharmaceuticals.

- **“Quality research is the foundation for evidence-informed massage therapy education and practice.”**
Data collected has demonstrated the cost-effectiveness of access to

complementary and integrative therapies, noting the economic favorability of those therapies compared to standard medical care alone.

Studies have also shown that those therapies have an increasing value to patients with complex health needs.

- **“Increase understanding of the benefits of massage therapy through education of the health care and wellness industry.”**

Hospitals and their medical staff realize that often patients who have access to both pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic strategies have improved outcomes.