

Name of Author: Tom Whitmore, Washington Delegate

Contact Information of Author: thoshmore@gmail.com, cell phone 408-807-6515

Date Authorized by Washington Chapter: Approved at the April 30 2014 Chapter Board Meeting

Subject: A Recommendation to The American Massage Therapy Association Board on Position Statements

Whereas:

The nature of research in massage has changed significantly since the days when the House of Delegates began examining position statements on the clinical efficacy of massage. In those days, studies that examined massage were relatively few and hard to find. There was at that time no need for review articles that would summarize the findings of many different papers. A therapist could fairly easily keep up with all the research that mentioned massage, if s/he could find it.

Now, research is much more common. There is an entire journal devoted to massage clinical studies. And Whereas:

There is currently a major change underway in how massage is treated in the different states and districts of the United States. While more states have licensing or certification than ever before, new issues about what should be regulated under those statutes (for example, whether the statutes should regulate reflexology, Roling, or Alexander Technique) are very common. It's difficult to assemble a group of massage therapists who actually represent all the states and districts in one place. The only such group that I know of that meets regularly is the House of Delegates of the American Massage Therapy Association.

And Whereas:

Reading and understanding clinical studies requires specialized experience and skills that not all Delegates have. We could work on training the Delegates, but this is a time-consuming and ongoing problem, as there are new Delegates every year. Not all of them want to learn this particular skill.

And Whereas:

The House of Delegates has a much greater mandate to focus on: bringing together therapists who can really see, as a group, a broader picture of what is going on with the field in the various states than any single person could have. These therapists can see emerging problems and opportunities that are getting lost in the noise. When the House debates on whether we should accept a particular Position Statement on clinical efficacy, these problems and opportunities lurk in the background, barely visible. We can work to make them much more visible.

Therefore:

The House of Delegates recommends that the AMTA Board study moving the function of generating and approving Position Statements on the clinical efficacy of massage from the House of Delegates to another group, and that the AMTA Board encourage the House to discuss issues that relate to the actual practice of massage therapy throughout the United States.