

## AMMA News Archives - 2005 through 2007

### AMMA 2006 Finances and Expenses

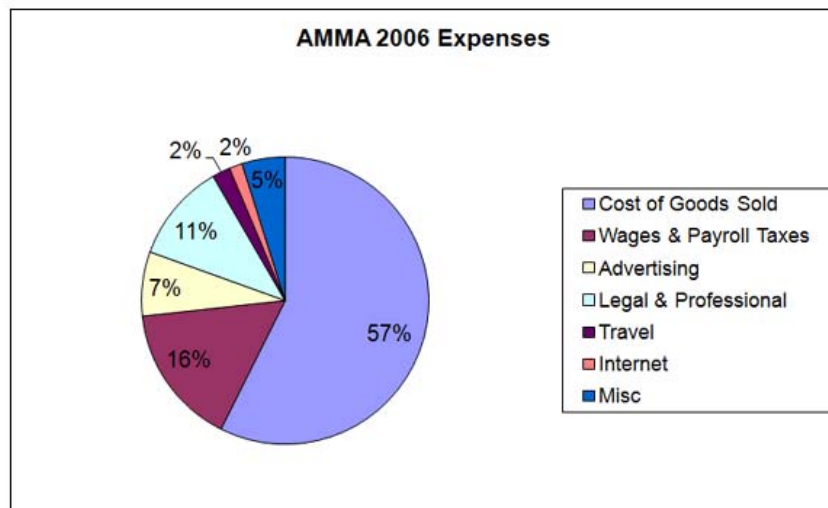
March, 2007

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The following chart shows how the AMMA allocates and spends its membership's money.

The AMMA is a non profit corporation that is governed by its non profit Board of Directors, it's Professional Advisory Board, and it's Membership Board of Directors.

In the chart below the category "Cost of Goods Sold" shows the percentage of expenses related to AMMA member liability insurance. This is a service that the AMMA provides to its members at no charge. The AMMA does not profit from the sale of insurance to its members, it only processes the applications and passes them on to the insurance carrier.



## **Medical Massage Therapy Educational Series: Medical Massage Therapy, Understanding the Fundamentals -**

March, 2007

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The American Medical Massage Association (AMMA) has completed the first stage of its implementation plan for a new series of educational materials on medical massage therapy designed for beginners seeking basic instruction in medical massage theories, concepts, and hands on treatment protocols.

As part of its mission the AMMA has established the development of massage education, and specifically the elevation of medical massage education that is evidence based, as one of its primary goals. Since its beginning in 1998 the AMMA has introduced over seventy educational products.

In 2006 the AMMA added eight new audio CD programs to its educational offerings. Four of the new audio CD programs are centered on the AMMA Degenerative Joint Disease Series and four others on the AMMA personal training, therapeutic exercise, and sports medicine programs.

The new AMMA Medical Massage Therapy Educational Series: Medical Massage Therapy, Understanding the Fundamentals, is based upon the booklet entitled, *An Outline of the Central Concepts of Medical Massage Therapy, Combining Science and the Applications of Technique and Protocol*.

The new AMMA medical massage therapy educational series is outlined as follows:

1. Important biomechanical and physiological concepts
2. Fundamental concepts in patient treatment
3. The importance of the joint complex in corrective and restorative care
4. The use of therapeutic modalities in the medical massage practice
5. Standardized medical massage terminology
6. Professional practice ethics and the medical massage therapist

The new AMMA medical massage therapy educational series is comprised of a new DVD release demonstrating the basic medical massage treatment protocol and six new booklets and audio CD programs based upon the outline listed above.

## AMMA News in Brief

November, 2006

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### CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION (CDC) URGES SCHOOLS TO DEVELOP DISTANCE EDUCATION PROGRAMS TO ENSURE CONTINUITY OF EDUCATION IN CASE OF PANDEMIC INFLUENZA

Dan Morris, American Medical Massage Association (AMMA) NBCE Committee member attended the special CDC pandemic influenza planning program held at Kalamazoo Valley Community College, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

The CDC is working with community public health departments and all schools across the U.S. to encourage schools to develop and to implement distance education learning strategies in case of an influenza pandemic or other catastrophic events that would prevent students from attending classes.

While we have not yet seen a recent pandemic or epidemic scenario in the U.S. that has disrupted student access to education, Hurricane Katrina and its impact upon schools in Louisiana is a stark example of what happens to normal life in the face of overwhelming tragedy.

*The CDC recommends that:*

#### 2. Continuity of Student Learning and Operations:

"Develop and disseminate alternative procedures to assure continuity of instruction (e.g., web-based distance instruction, telephone trees, mailed lessons and assignments, instruction via local radio or television stations) in the event of college/university closures."

"In the event of an influenza pandemic, colleges and universities will play an integral role in protecting the health and safety of students, employees and their families. The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have developed the following checklist as a framework to assist colleges and universities to develop and/or improve plans to prepare for and respond to an influenza pandemic. Further information on pandemic influenza can be found at [www.pandemic.gov](http://www.pandemic.gov)." CDC, Colleges and Universities Pandemic Planning Checklist, March 20, 2006 Version 2.2

The American Medical Massage Association (AMMA) has long supported and engaged in the development and implementation of distance education learning technology. The AMMA supports the development and implementation of web based education by accredited schools and career colleges with massage programs. The AMMA recommendations include the utilization of web and computer based educational programs, distance education and eLearning for lecture components of massage education and specifically general business courses and/or basic health science or health education courses.

Dr. Gregory T. Lawton of the Blue Heron Academy of Healing Arts and Sciences states that, "in spite of repeated warnings and recommendations from the CDC, HHS, and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the massage education community and industry is unprepared for events that could disrupt student access to training. Instead of preparing for potential problems the massage industry led by its associations and state massage boards have placed significant barriers in the way of developing distance education curriculum within proprietary and vocational schools, and career colleges for massage students. Case in point, massage association and board positions in opposition to distance education and their insistence on placing "in-class" language in massage bills. The October 16th issue of U.S. News and World Report, Special Annual Guide, carries the cover page headline, "E-LEARNING EXPLODES. Not only is eLearning an effective strategy during crisis, as is recognized by the CDC, HHS, the DHS, as well as, medical, health and educational associations and schools across the U.S., but it is growing and successful because it meets the needs of students for effective and affordable educational opportunity. In the case of massage associations that fail to support government recommendations, they are not only inconveniencing students but they may be placing them at risk. If, as is predicted by the CDC, HHS, and DHS a catastrophe does occur how are our students going to access education? What is the plan? In any kind of disaster, whether it is a result of weather or disease, it is very important for the mental health and wellbeing of our citizens (students) that they can participate in normal activities as quickly as possible. In the case of a massage school that cannot hold classes, distance education may determine the difference between staying in business or going out of business."

Ron Kuban, the author of a research paper on school disasters states, "After analyzing disasters and their possible consequences, concludes that school officials have the responsibility to gauge the hazards inherent in their school environment, plan the response to these hazards, and undertake the actions necessary to recover from these crisis situations. Ultimately, the nature of the response of school officials may influence whether lives are saved, mental and physical damage is minimized, or property is protected." PREPARING SCHOOLS FOR DISASTER, by Ron Kuban.

The AMMA continues to encourage proprietary massage schools, vocational and technical schools, and career and community colleges to develop and to implement web and computer based learning technologies not only with the view in mind of effective and affordable education for students, but also in preparation for any disruption in student access to education.

## AMMA News in Brief

October, 2006

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### AMMA Medical Massage Seminars

AMMA medical massage seminars were recently provided during the months of September and October 2006 in Idaho and Michigan. In the photographs to follow AMMA members receive instruction in the highly specialized techniques and procedures of medical massage.

AMMA medical massage techniques are evidence based and are derived from manual medicine and manual therapy procedures. The AMMA has classified medical massage techniques, terminology and science into an effective clinical system of manual health care that is focused on corrective and restorative care.

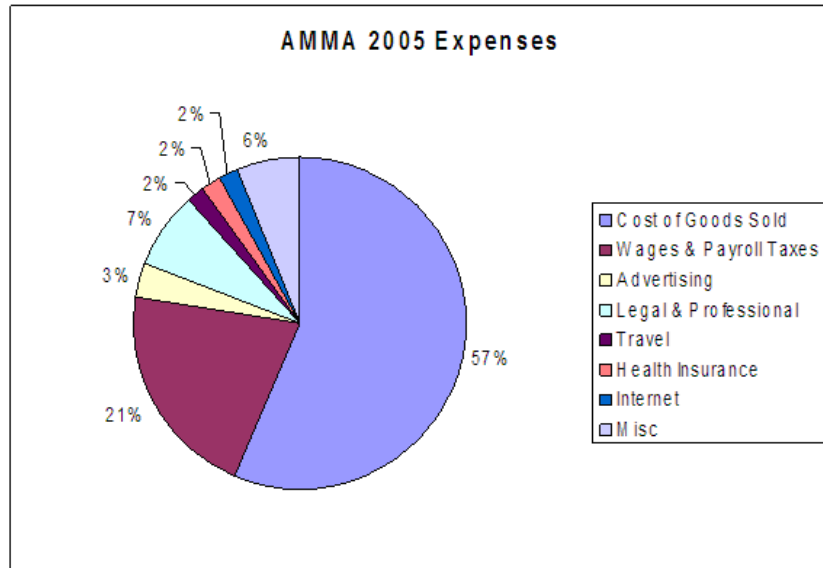


## AMMA Finances and Expenses

The following chart shows how the AMMA allocates and spends its membership's money. The AMMA has seen increases in legal and professional expenses that have been related to protecting the practice rights of AMMA members across the USA. A major expense has been the psychometric evaluation of the AMMA National Board Certification Exam in an ongoing relationship with the Michigan State University Center for Statistical Training and Consulting.

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## **AMMA News in Brief**

July 6th, 2006

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### **AMMA Position Statement**

The Ethical Practice of Medical Massage Therapy as an Alternative to Questionable Forms of Massage Therapy that Constitute Health Care Fraud and the Use of Fraudulent Credentials by Massage Therapists and Leaders within the Massage Community.

In 1998 the American Medical Massage Association (AMMA) released a position statement entitled, "Medical Massage Therapy, Rules of Professional Engagement" which attempted to outline a few basic principles related to the professional conduct of medical massage therapists. The "Rules of Professional Engagement" was seen as an "appendix" to, or a further elaboration upon, the AMMA Code of Ethics. In 2006 the AMMA released another position statement entitled "Categories and Definitions of Fringe Massage Therapy", which attempted to provide definitions of questionable forms of massage or massage practices.

All of these documents have been an attempt by the AMMA to define the ethical and scientific practice of medical massage therapy. With perhaps the exception of the AMMA Code of Ethics, none of these documents has been popular within the general massage community or its media. This lack of popularity and acceptance is largely because of the general massage community's enmeshment in fringe massage and pseudoscientific theories and practices. Of course it is the massage community's intimate involvement in fringe massage that resulted in the release of these position statements to begin with. Never the less, fringe practices within the general massage community are on an increase due in part to their popularity and profitability, but are also a direct result of the noticeable increase in the belief in superstition within our society in general.

One of the primary reasons that the AMMA was founded was to create a distinctive separation between the scientific practice of massage therapy based upon research evidence, scientific fact, and accepted clinical massage therapy and the numerous fringe massage methods and systems in common use and promoted by massage associations, schools and the massage media.

Recently the AMMA has had to address issues related to the fraudulent use of credentials, including medical credentials, by well known figures in the general massage community. As if the common use of fringe methods of massage, which constitutes forms of health care fraud by massage therapists and leaders within the massage profession, was not egregious enough we now have to add credential fraud to our list of vital concerns regarding the direction that the general massage community is moving.

Since 1997 the AMMA has attempted to offer guidance to the massage community regarding professional standards related to forms of massage therapy that deal with the medical treatment of patients including forms of massage therapy using descriptive terms such as clinical, orthopedic, and medical etc.

In keeping with the original mission of the AMMA, to create an ethical and rational alternative to fringe massage, the AMMA has expanded upon both its Code of Ethics and the original document "Rules of Professional Engagement". What follows is the amendment to the AMMA document, "Rules of Professional Engagement." The AMMA hopes that this new material will further explain the AMMA position related to the ethical practice of medical massage therapy, and other forms of massage that are directed at the clinical care and rehabilitation of patients.

American Medical Massage Association Board of Advisors

### **Medical Massage Therapy - Rules of Professional Engagement**

It never diminishes you as a professional to ask for help when you do not know the answer to a question or need assistance with a patient.

If you are not a physician you should always insist that the patient has seen or is referred to a physician for appropriate medical evaluation, diagnosis, and treatment.

Your first responsibility is for the safety and wellbeing of the patient and your obligation is to see that the patient is directed towards the most appropriate care for their condition.

Never assume that another health care provider's diagnosis, opinion, or care is correct. Everyone, regardless of their training, experience and background makes mistakes. Always be vigilant on behalf of your patient and do not hesitate to refer the patient for what you feel would be the most appropriate evaluation and care.

Even though you may be the victim of professional discrimination, never behave in kind, but always center your attention and efforts on actions which serve the best interests and needs of your patient.

Always adhere to the highest moral and ethical standards and never compromise these standards for personal gain, or for any reason.

Competent and ethical practitioners do not use methods of treatment or consultation that are not solidly based upon rational scientific fact, methods and research. The practice of applying or presenting false methods to a patient who is in pain or is suffering is a violation of the most basic ethical and moral principles of health care and healing.

Deeds are better than empty words, as a therapist your deeds should result in an alleviation of the pain and suffering of your patient. If they do not, then you have not honored your obligation to the patient. Do not practice methods of care that do not result in direct and tangible benefits to your patients and that do not alleviate their pain and suffering. To engage in idle fancy and vain imagination regarding your powers and abilities is self delusion, but worse than that, it is a betrayal of the most fundamental obligation of a healer.

The worst of all practitioners are those that profit from a patient's pain and suffering through misrepresentation and fraud, even worse than this are those that mislead their patients about the benefits of their methods and cures, but even worse than this are those that lie to their patients about their abilities, training, and credentials. Consider then those who do all of this for personal recognition, fame, and profit.

Most often it will be the patient that will provide the most meaningful clues as to the cause of their disease, pain, or suffering. The patient will tell you what is wrong with them but the words that they use will not necessarily fit a "medical diagnosis" but rather will explain the cause of the problem in "symbolic" terms that relate to the mental, emotional, spiritual, or physical cause of their illness.

## AMMA News in Brief

June 19th, 2006

### AMMA Celebrates Historic Moment in its Effort to Complete Psychometric Validation of the AMMA National Board Exam (AMMA NCE)

After what was at times a complex and difficult process the AMMA has now completed the development of the second massage national board exam to achieve psychometric validation, and the first to do so through a U.S. Department of Education approved institution. The AMMA, which was officially formed as non profit corporation in 1998 has provided this exam to over 5000 AMMA members across the U.S.

The AMMA NCE Committee was chaired by AMMA Director Marie Ruberto and received expert guidance from Tom Fuller, Ph.D. of Human Resource Associates and Virginia Dusseau, M.A., L.P.C., of Comprehensive Counseling. The psychometric test evaluation process was, and continues to be, conducted at Michigan State University and supervised by Ms. Sandra Herman, Ph.D. Associate Director of the Center for Statistical Training & Consulting at Michigan State University.



*AMMA National Board Exam Committee Members from left to right; Virginia Dusseau, M.A., L.P.C., Carol Baggerly, D.N., Lauren Sprader, AMMA Administrative Manager, Marie Ruberto, AMMA Managing Director, Tom Fuller, Ph.D., and Dan Morris, M.M.T., M.H.*

The photograph above is of the most recent meeting of the AMMA NCE Committee and represented the conclusion of the discriminate validity stage of test evaluation.

The next step in this process will occur at the state level where the AMMA will seek recognition of the AMMA NCE by states with massage therapy regulation. It should be noted here that the AMMA does not support mandatory national board testing and that the AMMA NCE was created as an elective professional credential and not as a "state licensure exam", however we have received numerous complaints from AMMA members seeking licensure in other states who have been forced to take the NCBTMB exams by state massage boards who would not recognize their AMMA credentials.

The completion of the psychometric phase of the NCE brings us to another stage in our efforts to achieve recognition for our members and their credentials.

## Medical Massage - Are you really a medical massage therapist?

January, 2006 - American Medical Massage Association

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In January of 2002 the American Medical Massage Association published a brief article entitled, "Are you really a medical massage therapist?" in response to the lack of definitions and standards related to medical massage training and practice within the massage profession at that time.

In its 2002 article on this subject the AMMA included a "test" for massage therapists to determine if they were able to answer basic questions that any well trained medical massage therapist should be able to answer. We commend the massage therapists that attempted to take this test and who emailed their answers to us.

In the original article the AMMA asked:

- Name a "biological sensor" that is stimulated by mechanical pressure on the skin and that blocks nociceptive nerve transmission
- Name a function of nerves , other than nerve transmission, that supplies nutrients to connective tissues, specifically ligaments
- Name a treatment modality that has been found to stimulate -  
Connective tissue remodeling  
Angiogenesis  
Increased mitochondrial ATP production
- What is the major pathogenic etiology that promotes pain and inflammation in carpal tunnel?

Today we would add:

- What is the significance of a single enlarged node located within the supra-clavicular notch?
- Patients showing signs and symptoms of pallor, dizziness, nausea, and hypotension during a manual therapy session are exhibiting what kind of reaction to the therapy?

The AMMA further asked readers to consider whether as medical massage therapists they:

- Do you diagnose patient conditions and treat according to the chief complaint?
- Do you achieve a clinical response during each treatment you provide?
- Do you treat and bill according to CPT procedure codes?
- Do you record patient case notes and maintain appropriate medical records?
- Do you accept and make referrals to medical and chiropractic physicians?
- Do you treat multiple patients per hour?
- Do you use physiotherapeutic equipment and modalities for patient treatment?
- Do you have an active patient base of at least 300 active patients?
- Do you have a striving and successful massage practice, the kind of success that allows you to buy the equipment you need and to attend continuing education classes to improve your skills?

The AMMA is a non profit national trade association representing medical massage therapists across the US. The AMMA was established to create standards of training and practice for the medical massage profession. Since its inception the AMMA has fought resistance within the massage profession in an effort to establish curriculum standards and professional definitions of practice for medical massage.

The American Medical Massage Association offers:

- The highest level of professional affiliation and recognition.
- National board certification and national board diplomat status
- Malpractice insurance for advanced practices
- Valid research based professional training and advancement

The AMMA offers its members access to the highest level national board exam and the first diplomat exam in the medical massage profession. The AMMA NCE has been psychometrically evaluated in an ongoing relationship with Michigan State University and this exam has been successfully completed by over 5000 AMMA members.

A primary mission of the AMMA is to advance training in medical massage therapy. In late 2005 the AMMA created a medical massage training program and became a state licensed post secondary school in its home state of Michigan. The AMMA is now actively working towards receiving state regulatory approval as a post secondary school in many other states.

The AMMA has established a code of professional ethics for its members and has established high and credible ethical standards related to evidence based massage practice, techniques, and procedures. It is the continued goal of the AMMA to personify the most credible standards within the massage profession, and never to accept anything less than this.

If the AMMA sounds like an organization that represents the ethical, moral and intellectual standards that you live and work by, then we want to talk to you.

Contact the AMMA at:

[info@americanmedicalmassage.com](mailto:info@americanmedicalmassage.com)

[www.americanmedicalmassage.com](http://www.americanmedicalmassage.com)

Telephone: 888-375-7245.

## CATEGORIES AND DEFINITIONS OF FRINGE MASSAGE THERAPY - AMMA POSITION STATEMENT

Muskegon, Michigan October, 2005 - Marie A. Ruberto, Executive Director

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*The American Medical Massage Association Board of Advisors in conjunction with the AMMA professional and associate membership has formulated this position statement regarding categories and definitions of fringe massage. Fringe massage is becoming increasingly popular within the general massage community and is occupying between 25 to 60 percent of massage therapy curriculum in massage schools. The AMMA has outlined in previous position statements its position regarding the composition of core medical massage curriculum, and under no circumstances does the AMMA support the inclusion of fringe massage courses or subject matter within core curriculum requirements.*

A number of leaders and individuals within the massage community have entertained the idea of creating a tiered system of education and regulation for the various kinds of massage therapy practiced in the US. As medical massage continues to grow and mature serious differences are arising between practitioners of general massage and medical massage therapy. One of those differences is related to the widespread and common use of fringe massage, psychic, metaphysical and paranormal practices, and pseudoscientific information. Under existing massage laws and criteria established by certification and accrediting bodies, all massage education and practices are subject to the same standards. Considering the extreme divergence between medical massage and general massage this is increasingly becoming an intolerable problem that begs for legislative solution.

The AMMA notes that the general massage community has largely adopted five hundred hours as a minimum standard for massage education. Further, the National Certification Board for Massage and Bodywork has broken their five hundred in class hour requirement into subcategories of core massage instruction. It is within the subcategories of the five hundred hour requirement, and specifically the two hundred hours of massage and bodywork and one hundred twenty five hours of instruction in a related field, that fringe content may be inserted into a massage therapy program.

It is the position of the AMMA that hours of instruction within a massage curriculum should be specifically organized around core massage courses, and not fringe massage.

The AMMA has in previous statements defined and elaborated upon definitions and standards of medical massage, medical massage education, medical massage terminology, approved medical massage techniques and treatment protocols, and medical massage research. Since 1999 the AMMA has led the massage profession in establishing these definitions and standards.

The AMMA has adopted the same research standards and ethical values as the medical profession and as such only utilizes methods of treatment that are evidence based. The AMMA accepts that medical ethics and medical massage ethics are one in the same, and that it is unethical to promote the use and practice of fringe massage as patient care.

The AMMA believes that minimum standards of education containing elements of fringe massage are not standards at all. Some subjects taught in massage schools and practices of the general massage community are so extreme in nature as to constitute health care fraud.

The AMMA has established the following categories of fringe massage:

- Energy "Massage"
- Psychic Practices Combined with Massage Therapy
- Metaphysical Practices
- Paranormal Practices
- Pseudoscientific Educational Instruction
- Pseudoscientific Massage Practices

**Energy "Massage"**

## **Energy "Massage"**

Energy "Massage" is composed of a number of systems of metaphysical practices such as Reiki, Polarity Therapy, Chi Kung, Quantum Touch, Therapeutic Touch, and other approaches involving the transference or "channeling" of energy by a therapist and in some cases with the aid of "spirit guides." Spirit guides may include departed souls, angels, or aliens from other dimensions or worlds. Commonly an energy therapist may use clairvoyance, mediumship, or other psychic practices.

## **Psychic Practices Combined with Massage Therapy**

Psychic practices are commonly combined with general massage therapy and may simply involve a therapist's belief in directed intent and the transmission of healing energy into a patient; in more extreme cases this practice may include psychic diagnosis and psychic psychotherapy.

## **Metaphysical Practices**

Metaphysical practices are based upon beliefs and practices that are not considered to be part of how the normal physical world works. Examples of a metaphysical practice would include elements of faith and belief seen in religions. Examples of metaphysical beliefs and rituals used by massage therapists are frequently based upon New Age religion.

## **Paranormal Practices**

Paranormal practices may include contact with departed souls, fortune telling, a belief in magic, ESP, levitation, shape shifting, and psychokinesis.

## **Pseudoscientific Educational Instruction**

Pseudoscientific educational instruction constitutes the largest and most misunderstood educational problem within the general massage community. The general massage therapy community has demonstrated a profound lack of knowledge of the importance of educational information based upon rational scientific concepts and a failure to understand the basic health sciences, specifically valid concepts of human physiology and biomechanics. Indeed, health science knowledge within the massage community can be summed up as high school to college undergraduate level information within the fields of anatomy and physiology. At this level of education the information provided is little more than subject definitions and terminology, and does not lead to the higher levels of education and knowledge seen in nursing, physical therapy or health care doctoral programs.

It is the use and reliance upon pseudoscientific educational instruction that has led to a confusing array of massage theories, popular massage practices, and franchised massage systems. There are close to two hundred of these divergent and non scientifically based massage theories and practice systems utilized by massage therapists.

The AMMA has published several position papers regarding this problem along with the production of numerous educational materials including manuals, booklets, audio CD's and DVD's. In addition, AMMA members have access to the Journal of the American Medical Massage Association, JAMMA, which is a scientific journal that publishes accepted scientific studies related to manual medicine. The JAMMA does not accept any form of advertising.

The AMMA has established educational, membership, and certification requirements at a higher level than those found within the general massage community. The AMMA will not accept for membership or certification applicant transcripts containing energy "massage", psychic practices combined with massage, metaphysical and/or paranormal practices, but because of the overwhelming proliferation of pseudoscientific educational information, massage techniques, and systems of treatment, the AMMA has accepted members with this background and training and has attempted to reeducate and retrain these therapists in correct physiological principles and methods of care based upon current biomechanical research.

### **Techniques, Practices and Systems of Massage not Accepted by the AMMA: (Abbreviated)**

The following list of techniques, practices, and systems of massage is submitted as an example of the types of massage or related therapies that are not accepted or recommended practices for AMMA members or for patient treatment within the medical massage profession:

- Reiki
- Polarity Therapy
- Therapeutic Touch
- Touch for Health
- Crystal Healing
- CranialSacral
- Subtle Energy
- Aroma Energy
- Aura Reading
- Hypnotherapeutic Massage
- Chakra Healing
- Five Element
- Vibrational Healing
- Zero Balancing
- Emotional Balancing
- Unwinding

In previous scientific papers published by the AMMA the subject of pseudoscientific information and practices based upon non physiological theories of body function have been outlined in detail. Pseudoscientific theories and practices based upon non physiological theories of body function are rampant within the massage community. Included within this collection of popular massage concepts and practices would be the underlying theories contained within the following massage systems or methods:

- PNF
- Trigger Point
- NMT
- Myofascial Release

The AMMA is not suggesting that some of the above massage systems or methods are not effective modes of therapy, but is stating that these methods and systems have been shown to be based on erroneous theories related to how they are commonly thought to affect body physiology.

When a health care discipline raises to the level of a regulated health care profession it is incumbent upon its members to subscribe to a higher level of accountability. Basing accountability upon minimum numbers of hours in training, and not upon the scientific integrity of educational content represents a failure of the governing and leading bodies within the massage community to competently direct the profession. More important than membership numbers are the values and ethics upon which we define ourselves. When a profession lays claim to the domain of human pain and suffering and purports to provide relief and comfort to the public for such conditions, then the ethical bar is set higher.

### **American Medical Massage Association**