

Massage Therapy Pilot Project

The Registered Massage Therapists' Association of Ontario (RMTAO) is pleased to update you on the Massage Therapy Pilot Project, undertaken in collaboration with the West Toronto Community Health Services (WTCHS), to verify the health and cost benefits of integrating therapeutic massage (RMT) into primary health care teams.

Recently, the RMTAO completed a series of videos. Below is a link to the second of the videos:



[A Patient's Story: RMTAO Pilot Project](#)
vimeo.com

Access to care for many Ontarians remains a problem. In particular, access to massage therapy services are very limited, especially for Ontarians who do not have third-party insurance or who cannot afford to pay out-of-pocket for massage therapy. The wait for access to rehabilitation services in primary care is high. Moreover, those who are most vulnerable and at risk for health deterioration are often the ones with the least access. For these reasons, the RMTAO has partnered with WTCHS to pilot the integration of a Registered Massage Therapist – funded by the RMTAO – in a primary and allied healthcare team.

RMT services are being provided at two sites within the primary care team at WTCHS. The project is the first step aimed at integrating Registered Massage Therapists (RMTs) into interprofessional primary care teams and adding a proven health discipline to the wellness options available to their patients.

The RMTAO is pleased to be associated with WTCHS, an agency fully funded by the province through Ontario Health. WTCHS has uniquely positioned itself to provide its clients and select patients referred from other primary care models. WTCHS provides a full range of community health care and support services to keep people healthy and living in the community while avoiding unnecessary hospital use.

Numerous studies over multiple decades have shown that therapeutic massage is a safe, reliable treatment for musculoskeletal injuries and has multiple benefits in pain

management without the use of drugs. Massage therapy has also proven to be beneficial in helping with depression and other forms of mental illness. The Massage Therapy Pilot Project will evaluate how massage therapy can augment pain management, rehabilitation and mental wellness as part of a community team-based holistic approach to interprofessional primary care that will support WTCHS' clients to stay healthy and living at home.

The one-year pilot program will be evaluated using a Quadruple Aim lens, which is a framework that focuses on:

- Improved population health outcomes
- Improved care and patient experience
- Improved healthcare team well-being, and
- Lower costs/better value.

The Massage Therapy Pilot Project findings will be shared widely. The objective is to assess the contributions of RMTs as part of an integrated primary healthcare model across the province.

We look forward to sharing the full results of the project with you once they become available, and I welcome any questions about the project you may have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "M. Feraday".

Michael Feraday
Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer
Registered Massage Therapists' Association of Ontario