



REGISTERED MASSAGE THERAPISTS' ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO

# 2021-2022 STRATEGIC PLAN SUMMARY

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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### **Mission**

To provide leadership and advocacy to an engaged and united profession.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the association is to add value to its members by:

1. Advocating for the general interests of its members and communicating the importance of massage therapy to external stakeholders (government, insurance companies, other healthcare professions)
2. Providing support and resources for RMTs to develop successful practices

### **Board Ends Priorities**

1. The profession of Massage Therapy in Ontario has a credible and visible identity.
2. The profession of massage therapy in Ontario has exemplary professional standards, embraces ethical conduct, respects diversity and is dedicated to high quality education.
3. The profession of massage therapy in Ontario engages in a culture of continuous inquiry.

## RMTAO 2021-2022 Strategic Plan Summary

4. The profession of massage therapy in Ontario is recognized by the public, healthcare professionals and other stakeholders as a valued healthcare option.
5. The profession of massage therapy in participates in integrated team oriented healthcare to achieve the best possible treatment outcomes for the patient.
6. The profession of massage therapy in Ontario is prosperous, successful and promotes healthy practices

The Board approved prioritization for operational planning based on the strategic planning discussions of the Board.

- Advocacy – 35%
- Research – 10%
- Education – 20%
- Communication – 35%

### **Assumptions**

The Strategic Plan assumes a 'return to normal' meaning the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic will be minimal and health officials will lift restrictions. The economy and business in general should ramp up as society returns to normal. This should lead to increased demand for massage therapy and a healthier economic climate. Government will also be easier to contact as they move away from crisis management to a return to normal, which will assist our advocacy efforts.

## **2020-2021 YEAR IN REVIEW**

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The 2020-21 operational plan anticipated a degree of 'return to normal' and assumed the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic would lessen. Unfortunately, this did not happen and Ontario has remained in lockdown, which affected many aspects of our plan. While RMTs returned to work in increasing numbers, the difficult economic environment and social isolation has made the last 15 months (as of writing) very challenging for all. While it is anticipated that the lock-down will end this fiscal, it is unlikely that this will have a significant impact on our results for the remaining 6 months of this fiscal. The lockdown negatively influenced our Education, Conference and advertising revenue. However, we continued to adapt by introducing new virtual platforms. We went through various learning curves with webinars, our Award Dinner and our

Conference. Some members did struggle with the online/virtual formats, but other members appreciated the new format. Advertiser struggled with the value proposition of virtual versus in-person sponsorships etc. However, for the most part, our virtual attendance numbers were acceptable given the circumstances. The content and execution of our virtual efforts were largely successful in spite of the steep learning curve in acquiring virtual event platforms and launching these events for the first time. It has also been difficult to advance the planned advocacy efforts with Government that were part of the 2020-21 Operational Plan. The focus of both Federal and Provincial governments has almost entirely been on the pandemic and its successive waves making meetings and discussions problematic.

The good news is that membership has grown significantly during the pandemic. In addition, the advocacy and assistance we provided during the pandemic has helped reinforce the value we bring to members. It has also provided us with numerous opportunities to reinforce the identity of the Association and the profession with the Ministry as a regulated health profession.

Financially, we were able to continue to improve the financial position of the RMTAO through strong financial management in spite of a drop in revenues in several revenue generating areas. We are much stronger financially and in memberships than we were in March 2020 when the pandemic hit.

## ADVOCACY (35%)

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RMTs need a unified voice that can promote massage therapy as an integral component of healthcare to external stakeholders (government, insurance companies and other healthcare professions) that may influence the profession.

The advocacy goals for the RMTAO in the coming year relate to three main areas: government, inter-professional collaboration and the insurance industry.

The three strategic goals relating to advocacy are:

- **Government - To engage with the government to promote the importance of massage therapy for the health and well-being of Canadians and push for the general interests of RMTs in Ontario.**
- **Inter-professional Collaboration - Connect with other healthcare professions to position massage therapy as a strong complement to other healthcare professions and become part of the circle of care of patients.**
- **Insurance - Engage with insurance companies to educate them on importance of massage therapy for health and wellness of Canadians and uphold the interests of RMTs.**

## RESEARCH (10%)

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Research is considered a fundamental component to promote massage therapy as a credible profession. RMT's need support to embrace an evidence-based practice and develop new research.

The strategic goals relating to research are:

- **To support and facilitate the development of additional massage therapy research.**
- **Ensure RMTs have access to research and are able to understand and apply it.**

## EDUCATION (20%)

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Members value educational tools that support them to build successful practices and allow them to engage in continuous education that enhances their knowledge and improves the quality of their services.

The RMTAO is planning to expand our continuing education program, and we will continue to offer and grow the annual education conference. These activities are expected to include an in-person component. The primary strategic goal of our Education programs is to:

- **Increase the knowledge our members need to be successful in their practice.**

## COMMUNICATION (35%)

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It is crucial to have strong and consistent communication channels with members and the general public to gather relevant data on how to move the profession forward and increase the impact of the association.

Communication is arguably the most important aspect of the work that we do, and everything we do has a communications aspect to it. Traditionally this has meant strong communication and responses to individual members as well as more broadly through the Friday File, MTT, Blogs, social media, etc. As part of our plan, we are focusing our communications on the following strategic goals:

- **Develop marketing campaigns to educate the general public on the importance of massage therapy to their health and wellbeing.**
- **Regular engagement with members to gather relevant data on areas of interest and rising needs.**

## **OPERATIONS**

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### **Strategic Goals:**

- **Improve financials**
- **Increase membership**
- **Increase internal efficiency**