

#RMTAO **Listens**



RMTAO ANNUAL REPORT 2016



Registered Massage Therapists'
Association of Ontario

“We are part
of the important conversations,
important decisions,
and necessary actions that keep the
profession of massage therapy
at the forefront of health care in Ontario.”

—RMTAO

Table of Contents

From the RMTAO

■ Letter from the Chair and Executive Director	4
■ 2016 Board of Directors	5
■ RMTAO Staff	5

Membership

■ Your Profession. Your Association. Your Voice.	6
■ Membership by the Numbers	6
■ Affinity Programs	7
■ Office Move	7

Recognition

■ The DARE Challenge	8
■ Celebrating Success	8

RMTAO Listens

■ Community-Based Networks	9
■ Town Hall Meeting	10
■ Tour Across Ontario	10

Learning

■ Professional Development	11
----------------------------	-----------

Communication

■ The RMTAO Online	13
■ Massage Therapy Awareness Week	15
■ Social Media	16
■ The Friday File	18
■ Massage Therapy Today	19

Advocacy

■ National Advocacy	20
■ Provincial Advocacy	21



Letter from the Chair and Executive Director

The Board and Staff of the RMTAO work every day to make sure that massage therapy continues to be a respected, recognized, and viable profession. We know how much massage therapists love what they do, and we want to ensure that all massage therapists in Ontario can keep doing what they love by providing care to their patients. We focus on making their professional lives easier so they can focus on building, growing and maintaining successful practices, providing patients the best possible care.

Part of our vision for the profession is the inclusion in government programs, growing the available research, and solidifying our position in the insurance industry. All of this will help to increase the presence of massage therapy in the minds of Ontarians as a valuable health care option. None of this would be possible without the engagement and support of our members. It is thanks to our dedicated members that we can be a part of the important conversations, important decisions, and necessary actions that keep the profession of massage therapy at the forefront of health care in Ontario.

This past year, the RMTAO engaged our members to provide feedback and support to promote the benefits of massage therapy and the valuable skills of Registered Massage Therapists to the public, government, insurers, and other stakeholders. The Town Hall Meeting in Toronto and our tour across Ontario gave RMTs the chance to engage with the RMTAO in person and share their vision for the future

of the profession in Ontario and Canada. We used the social media hashtag #RMTAOListens to get input from those unable to make the in-person meetings. By bringing together the variety of feedback that was provided, we were able to amplify that feedback and direct it towards the appropriate stakeholders and effectively represent the best interests of the massage therapy profession.

Massage therapy across Canada has become more united over the past several years. Working together on national issues allows us to combine our efforts to affect greater change. There are many issues that affect massage therapists in Canada regularly in their practices. By working with our national massage therapy partners, we are able to have a greater positive impact on the growth and advancement of the massage therapy profession not only in Ontario but across Canada.

The RMTAO, in its leadership role with the Canadian Massage Therapist Alliance (CMTA), is a valuable contributor for national initiatives for the profession of massage therapy. We initiated the creation and distribution of a national survey of the profession. The survey will help us to develop a clear picture of the issues that concern massage therapists at a national level and determine how best to approach those concerns to ensure that massage therapy is recognized nationally as an important part of the health care picture. Through our active leadership with the CMTA, we provided

feedback to the Canadian Massage Therapy Council for Accreditation regarding their proposed accreditation standards. These standards will ensure that entry-level massage therapy educational programs across Canada are successfully training the next generation of massage therapists.

We have work ahead of us. The regulatory landscape is changing, the insurance landscape is

evolving, and, perhaps most importantly, the face of health care across Canada is changing. The RMTAO will also continue to evolve and we will be there to best represent the interests of the profession of Massage Therapy. The RMTAO is your voice advocating for your profession. As you continue to engage with your association, that voice can and will be heard. It is your profession. It is your Association. It is your Voice.



Andrew Lewarne, RMI
Executive Director & CEO



Krystin Bokalo, BAHSc, CAT(C), RMT
Chair, Board of Directors

2016 Board of Directors



Krystin Bokalo,
BAHSc, CAT(C), RMT
Chair



Juliana Fernandes, RMT
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Darren Nixon, RMT
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Jennifer Bloch, RMT
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Dan Carell, RMT
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Sergio Muredda, RMT
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Debbie Wilcox, RMT
Director

RMTAO Staff



Andrew Lewarne, RMT
Executive Director
& CEO



Jill Haig,
Manager of
Operations



Laura Fixman,
Communication and
Member Services Coordinator



Valbona Kapastra,
Accounting
Coordinator

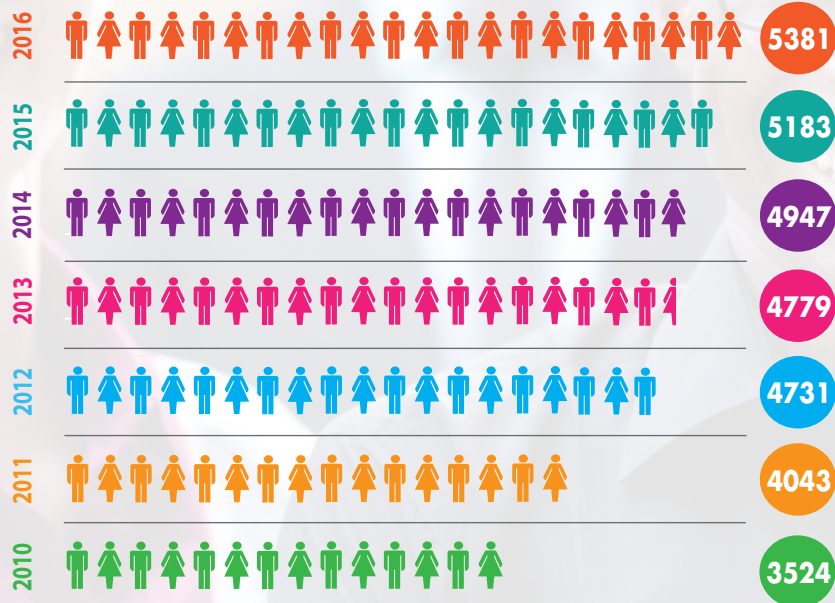
Membership

Your Profession. Your Association. Your Voice.

Over the past year, the RMTAO has been focusing on opportunities to engage our members in the work of the Association to advance the massage therapy profession. The RMTAO works in the best interest of the massage therapy profession in Ontario, acting as your voice when advocating to government, the insurance industry, and other stakeholders. The RMTAO is your voice. Amplified. We are able to direct that voice to the right people who can make change happen.

Our membership has continued to grow, and our members have become more engaged in the work of the Association. We bring the thoughts, ideas and insights of our members together so that we can be part of the important conversations and necessary actions. We represent more RMTs than ever before, and that number is growing. It's only with the support, the passion, and the dedication of our members that we can continue to work to ensure a better future for the massage therapy profession as a whole.

Membership by the Numbers



18
New Lifetime Members

84
Lifetime Members

Thank you to our 84 Lifetime Members for your continued support of the RMTAO!

The RMTAO was pleased to make a total of 19 informative presentations about the RMTAO and benefits of membership to 10 schools across Ontario!

968
Student Members

Affinity Programs

The RMTAO approach to membership, programs and services, allows members to pay only for the programs that best suit their needs and interests. Our flexible approach to membership means that membership is completely customized! We are continuously evaluating our programs and services to ensure that they meet the needs of our membership. We are looking to modify existing programs and add new ones over the coming year!

- Professional Liability Insurance
- Acupuncture Modality Insurance
- Ultrasound Modality Insurance
- Personal Accident Disability Insurance
- Home and Auto Insurance
- Health and Dental Benefits
- TELUS Mobility Smartphone Plans
- GoodLife Fitness Membership
- IN-CAM Research Network Discounts
- Point of Sale
- Practice Management Software
- Perropolis

96% of RMTAO
Members
Purchased
Professional
Liability
Insurance



Office Move

The RMTAO moved to a more spacious, more effective office space in July 2016! **Our new office space is located at 1243 Islington Avenue, Suite 704.** We will continue to provide our members with exceptional service from our new location, and continue to represent the entire massage therapy profession!

Recognition

The DARE Challenge

This year, our members rose to the challenge again, by encouraging their peers to join the RMTAO for the first time. With the support of our members, we were able to gain 41 new members as a direct result of this month-long campaign, and our members are continuing to refer their colleagues to the association even after the official campaign is over. Thank you to all of our members who dared their colleagues to join the association!



Celebrating Success

The RMTAO Member Recognition and Awards Dinner
Held on May 14, 2016 in Toronto.



RMT of the Year:
Richard Lebert



Research Award:
Wray Barraclough



Professional Service Award:
Margaret Wallis-Duffy



Educator of the Year:
Stephanie Cox

The RMTAO also recognized various members who have made significant contributions to the Association and to the massage therapy profession. These include Community-Based Network coordinators, committee members, and other volunteers who have dedicated their time and efforts to the association. Thank you again to all of those members that are engaged in the work of the RMTAO, that speak up and work hard, and are committed to moving the profession of massage therapy forward.

Community-Based Networks

Community-Based Networks (CBNs) give RMTs the opportunity to connect with their peers, ask questions, share their knowledge, and build a strong local community of RMTs.

37 Community-Based Network meetings were held this year across Ontario, and in addition to our Executive Director's tour across the province, topics included communication, accounting, specific treatment techniques, and more! We partnered with members of The Investor's Group to provide a presentation on Financial Literacy for RMTs that was hosted by several CBNs. **Thank you to our CBN Coordinators for bringing together RMTs in your communities and for your commitment to the massage therapy profession.**

RMTAO

Community-Based Networks

- Barrie
- Bowmanville
- Brantford
- Cambridge
- Clarkson
- Cornwall
- Durham Region
- Grey County
- Guelph
- Halton-Peel
- Hamilton
- Kingston
- Kitchener-Waterloo
- Leeds-Grenville
- London
- Mississauga
- Orillia
- Ottawa
- Ottawa Valley
- Sarnia
- Sault Ste. Marie
- St. Catharines
- Stouffville
- Sudbury
- Thunder Bay
- Tillsonburg
- Toronto Central North
- Toronto East
- Toronto West
- West Niagara – Grimsby, Smithville, Beamsville
- Windsor
- Woodstock

32

Active

Community-Based Networks

Across Ontario!





Town Hall Meeting

The RMTAO met with many engaged RMTs on Monday March 7, 2016 at the Allstream Centre in Toronto.

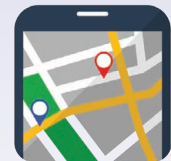
Our Executive Director, the RMTAO Board of Directors, and our engaged members got together to discuss the future of the massage therapy profession. We discussed the barriers the profession faces relating to identity, professionalism, research, awareness, collaboration and viability and brainstormed possible solutions.

Members were able to follow the Town Hall meeting on Twitter using the hashtag #RMTAOListens, and we were able to take questions and comments on Twitter, making this Town Hall an interactive event even for those unable to attend.



Tour Across Ontario

For those that couldn't attend our Town Hall, our Executive Director Andrew Lewarne took the show on the road! Andrew visited 12 cities across Ontario in April 2016 to speak to local RMTs about the challenges they face in their practices and in their communities. The members of each community told us where they feel they need representation and what the RMTAO can do to help. The RMTAO received valuable feedback from our members across Ontario, which we used to create a rolling five-year operational plan. This tour would not have been possible without the support from our Community-Based Network coordinators, who hosted the meetings in their communities, and helped get the word out to local RMTs.



The RMTAO visited:



Hanover
Sarnia
London
Sudbury
Ottawa
Kingston
Guelph
Barrie
Thunder Bay
Pembroke
St. Catharines
Oakville



Professional Development

The RMTAO Offered **53** Courses in 2016

Certificate of Excellence in Assessment

The RMTAO offered 34 assessment courses in 2016. These courses were taught by Physiotherapist Aaron Rutter, and offered all across Ontario. We also added a new course “Clinical Decision Making During an Assessment: Live Cases”, which involves the examination, assessment, treatment strategy development for live cases. The courses are extremely popular and continue to be a key part of the RMTAO education program.

Congratulations
2016 Certificate of Excellence
Recipients

Irene Gunn
Jackie Mungal
Jordan Rabideau

Congratulations to all of the RMTAO members who earned the Certificate of Excellence this year! Through your hard work and dedication to continued learning, you have confirmed and verified the high standards of care you provide as an Ontario RMT.

Gibb Professional Portfolio Preparation

The RMTAO offered 11 Gibb Professional Portfolio Preparation for RMTs workshops in 2016. The individuals who completed this workshop left better prepared for peer-assessment, with a well-organized portfolio, and a more thorough understanding of their administrative responsibilities as RMTs.

MVA and WSIB Cases

The RMTAO’s online course, Insurance Reimbursement for Massage Therapists: Working with Auto Insurance and WSIB Cases, in partnership with Centennial College, was offered three times in 2016 to a total of 65 people.

New courses!

The RMTAO introduced three new courses in 2016, all taught by Amy Beggs, RMT.

It's All Coming Back to Me Now: Professional Practice Review for RMTs

This workshop reviews the essential elements of professional practice including standards of practice, professional boundaries, client relations, legislation, regulations, and regulatory obligations.

Record Keeping Essentials

This workshop provides a detailed overview of a massage therapist's record-keeping requirements, including all necessary documentation such as: health history, initial treatment plan and ongoing notes; key information that must be captured at every stage of the process; legal requirements for maintenance, storage and destruction.

Understanding My Rights and Responsibilities

This workshop highlights common business issues including how to handle a difficult situation with a client or colleague while still maintaining professionalism and integrity, how to effectively negotiate a contract, and what you need to know to sell your practice.

Thank you
to our instructors for providing
high-quality
continuing education courses **for RMTs!**

Communication

RMTAO.com

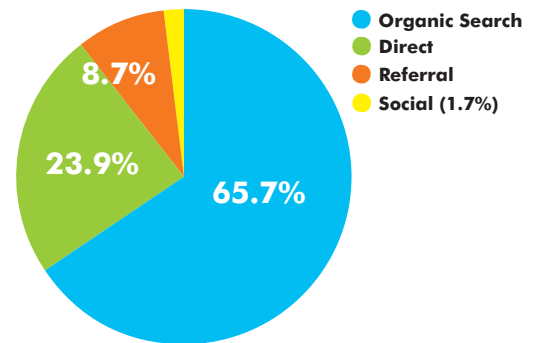
The website RMTAO.com helps our members find the products and resources they're looking for, promotes the massage therapy profession to the general public, and promotes the activities of the RMTAO to all RMTs and to the public.

Top Search Terms

Bringing Users to **RMTAO.com**:



Top Channels



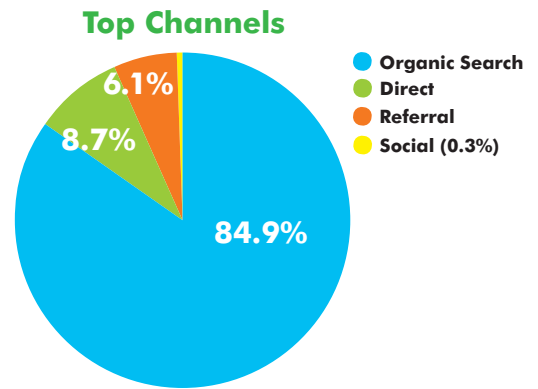
Most Popular

Pages on **RMTAO.com**:

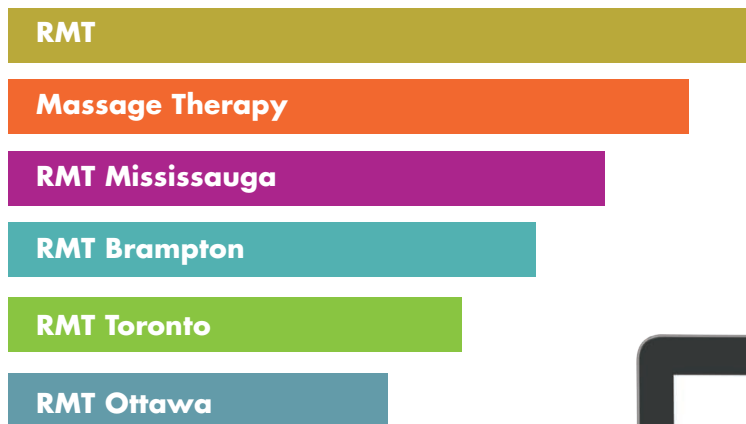


RMTFind.com

RMTFind.com is a search tool for the public, listing RMTAO members. Members of the public can search RMTFind.com by therapist name, city or postal code.



The Most Common Search Terms that bring users to **RMTFind.com**:



Massage Therapy

AWARENESS WEEK



Massage Therapy Awareness Week took place from October 23-29, 2016, and the RMTAO took part in several initiatives to promote the massage therapy profession during this exciting week.

We created several articles outlining the areas in which massage therapy can be beneficial for many populations and conditions, including in the workplace, for chronic pain, palliative care, pregnancy, athletics, stress and anxiety, and seniors.

We shared these articles on our social media channels, which received an extremely positive response, and helped us increase the public profile of the massage therapy profession. Thanks to the support of our membership, we were able to get the word out about the amazing benefits of massage therapy.

These important articles remain on the RMTAO website, and received record engagement from our members. By sharing our posts on our own social media channels, our members were able to help spread the message, and also strengthen their own social media content and engage their patients. These articles hit on key demographics and conditions for which massage therapy can be extremely beneficial, and were written to be accessible and informative for our members' patients and potential patients.

Social Media

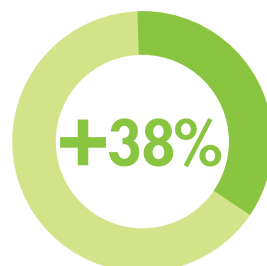
The RMTAO continues to be active on Facebook and Twitter, and this year our focus has been ensuring that our posts are both evidence-based and engaging. Both our number of followers and the frequency of interactions with our posts have increased. Posts that our members can share with their patients on their social media channels, about the benefits of massage therapy, continue to be the most popular. On our social media channels, we also share the latest news and research relating to massage therapy and information about RMTAO membership.



Social Media Toolkit

For Massage Therapy Awareness Week, the RMTAO also created a Social Media Toolkit to be used by members to promote the massage therapy

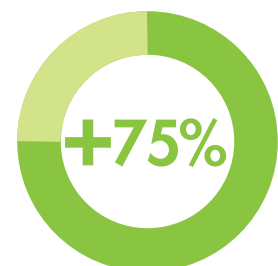
profession and their practices on their own social media channels. **This toolkit included social media do's and don'ts, terminology, strategy and sample content.**



1,424
Followers



85
Monthly Tweet Likes



105
Monthly Retweets

One of our most popular tweets from 2016 was a post highlighting the history of the RMTAO:

1

@RMTAO

Did you know...

Registered Massage Therapists in Ontario were first organized as "Associated Masseurs" in 1936

#ThrowbackThursday

4,138 Impressions, 21 Engagements

Other Top Tweets:

2

The Role of Massage in Sports Performance and Rehabilitation:

Current Evidence and Future Direction.

[#Rio2016](#)

<http://ow.ly/PXTp303fEi2>

2,117 Impressions ■ **48 Engagements**

3

Did you know?... #Research shows that massage therapy is a strong option for pain relief.

[#ThursdayThoughts](#)

<http://ow.ly/YQ0M301knKS>

1,582 Impressions ■ **16 Engagements**

4

The Effects of Massage Therapy on Multiple Sclerosis Patients' Quality of Life and Leg Function.

[#endMS](#)

<http://ow.ly/UXm03003lWk>

1,234 Impressions ■ **27 Engagements**

5

Massage Therapy for Reducing Pain, Anxiety, and Depression in Oncological Palliative Care Patients.

[#endoflifecare](#)

<http://ow.ly/107Y6L>

1,593 Impressions ■ **27 Engagements**

Our Twitter channel has continued to be successful due to increased interaction with followers, and closely following the trends in social media topics and best practices.

We also continue to post shareable massage therapy and health news, which can be shared by our followers.

Facebook



Our most popular post of the year was announcing Massage Therapy Awareness Week, encouraging people to visit an RMT, and introducing the popular hashtag #NMTAW.

1,850
Page Likes



This post reached:

27,633

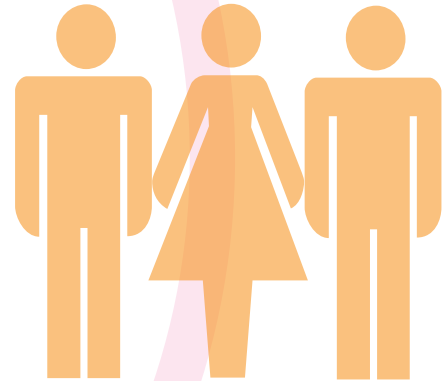
PEOPLE

79

LIKES

365

SHARES



Our posts during Massage Therapy Awareness Week, and their accompanying photos were very successful, generating a total of:

55,232

REACHED

1,648

LIKES

849

SHARES

the Friday File

The Friday File

The Friday File e-newsletter is still a popular source of news, research and information for RMTAO members. The Friday File continues to provide weekly updates about the massage therapy profession and the activities of the association, and shares relevant research and news articles.

The Friday File is sent weekly to over:

6,000

members and partners.

Massage Therapy Today

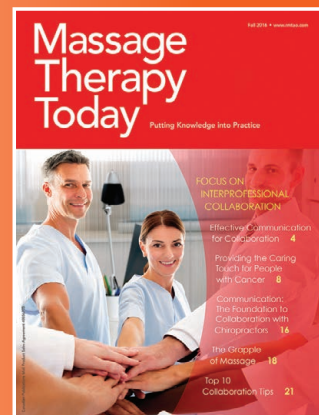
Putting Knowledge into Practice

The RMTAO released four issues of *Massage Therapy Today: Putting Knowledge Into Practice*.

The themes for this year were

- **Technology**
- **Research**
- **Pain**
- **Interprofessional Collaboration.**

The issues in the winter, spring and fall are sent to all RMTAO members, and the summer issue is sent to all RMTs in Ontario. The summer issue included information outlining the benefits of RMTAO membership, highlighting advocacy and popular features.



Advocacy

The RMTAO advocates on behalf of all Registered Massage Therapists in Ontario. The RMTAO is the voice of the massage therapy profession in Ontario, and we work to ensure that the massage therapy profession is recognized, respected and viable. Our advocacy efforts have focused on collaboration with other massage therapy associations across Canada, other health professional associations in Ontario, strengthening relationships with government and the insurance industry, and other essential stakeholders.

National Advocacy

The RMTAO continues to be a valuable partner with other provincial and territorial associations across Canada as a member of the Canadian Massage Therapist Alliance (CMTA). The RMTAO has taken a leadership role in the CMTA, ensuring that the massage therapy profession has a unified voice at a national level. National advocacy initiatives pursued over the past year include:

- The creation and distribution of a **National Survey** of the massage profession.
- Initiation of a **National Environmental Scan** to get a clear picture of the landscape of the massage therapy profession at a national level.
- Consultation and collaboration with the **Canadian Massage Therapy Council for Accreditation**.
- Assisted in the review of **CMTA bylaws** and policies to ensure the CMTA continued to work for the benefit of the massage therapy profession across Canada.
- Engagement with the **insurance industry** regarding evidence supporting the efficacy of massage therapy as a health care option.
- Publication of an interview in ***Benefits Canada Magazine***.

Provincial Advocacy

The RMTAO advocates on behalf of all Registered Massage Therapists in Ontario, on a number of issues that directly affect the profession at a provincial level. We have continued to build and develop important collaborative relationships with other health professional associations, government, regulatory colleges and other stakeholders. The RMTAO has undertaken several important advocacy initiatives over the past year including:

- Providing feedback to the **Ontario Clinic Regulation Working Group** relating to the proposed clinic regulations.



- Active participation in the **Coalition Representing Health Professionals in Automobile Insurance Services** to meet and provide feedback to the

Financial Services Commission of Ontario and the **Ontario Ministry of Finance** on the update to the **Common Traffic Impairment Guidelines**.

- With our partners in the **Coalition Representing Health Professions in Automobile Insurance Services**, provided a formal response to the **Financial Services Commission of Ontario** regarding the draft statement of priorities.
- Working closely with our partners at the **Coalition of Ontario Regulated Health Professional Associations**, on important issues of shared concern.
- Participation in consultation with the **Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care** regarding the **Taskforce on the Prevention of Sexual Abuse of Patients** and the **Regulated Health Professions Act**.
- Participation in the creation and development of a program of care for mild traumatic brain injury for the **Workplace Safety and Insurance Board**.



- Engagement with the **College of Massage Therapists of Ontario** to address issues of importance to the profession.
- Participation in discussions with **Bone and Joint Canada** regarding **GLA:D** protocol for **Osteoarthritis**.

- Engagement with the **Ontario Council of Private Massage Therapy Colleges** and the **Heads of Massage Therapy Programs in Community Colleges** in regards to common clinical language of measurements and outcomes, interprofessional collaboration, and business training in current massage therapy program curriculae.



- Presentation to the Heads of Massage Therapy Programs in Community Colleges on the potential move to a **baccalaureate degree**.
- Engagement with the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care regarding a modernization of the **Regulated Health Professions Act**.
- Providing support to the Prince Edward Island Massage Therapy Association regarding a **Code of Ethics** and **Standards of Practice** as they work towards regulation.
- Contribution to other health care professional association publications relating to massage therapy and **interprofessional collaboration**.



#RMTAO **Listens**

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@RMTAO

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Registered Massage Therapists'
Association of Ontario