



## ADVOCATE FOR MASSAGE THERAPY AS A RECOGNIZED AND RESPECTED HEALTHCARE PROFESSION

May 20, 2018

**To:** WSMTA Board of Directors and Members

**From:** WSMTA Board Member, CPP Program Member, Robbin Blake, LMT (rblake@mywsmta.org)

**Re:** May 11, 2018 Board of Massage (BOM) Meeting Notes

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The BOM began by reviewing Massage Education and Continuing Education. After that, it discussed massage in the perineal area and breast massage. Please note that no changes have been finalized. What is being reported is the BOM's current position on topics.

**Massage Education:** The BOM kept the 625 hours in the breakdown they had discussed in the prior meeting. The current breakdown is:

- Anatomy and physiology -- 90 hours
- Kinesiology (palpation, range of motion and joint function) -- 60 hours
- Pathology -- 70 hours
- Massage Theory and Practice -- 260 hours
- Student Clinic -- Minimum 50 hours (maximum 75 hours)
- Clinical/Business Practices (hygiene, recordkeeping, medical terminology, business) -- 55 hours
- Ethics (roles and boundaries, personal safety, interaction with clients, state and local laws) -- 40 hours

There was discussion about leaving out AMTA-WA's description of these topics in the WAC, the BOM wanted to remove them. The BOM tabled this to another meeting. There was also discussion about reducing the ethics category, but that was also dropped and left at 40 hours.

**Continuing Education:** In the prior meeting in March, the BOM had discussed the following:

- Anyone who teaches CE must have two years of professional experience to teach for a fee. The general public unanimously asked for 3 years experience (this is what it had been previous to the current WAC wording).
- CPR is to be made a required CE for all LMTs and at this point must be done in a hands-on class.
- The 8 hours required for "direct supervised massage skills training" was flip-flopped with "remaining twelve hours" so that 12 hours were to be required by "direct supervised massage skill training" and 8 "remaining hours. So now the break down is:
  - 12 hours minimum direct supervised massage skills training
  - 4 hours minimum ethics
  - CPR (for however many hours an LMT registers for)
  - remaining hours may consist of live class, self study, teaching a course for the first time, business and management courses, distance service, active service on massage related boards or committees

The concept of flipping the 8 hands-on and 12 other hours was brought up in a discussion between DOH employees and the Board and the Board latched onto it. The board initially stated it would consider it but by the end of the meeting, it appeared to agree to it.

- Ethics can also include 2 hours maximum of attending a Board of Massage meeting (phone call meetings were exempted).
- Provisions were made for documenting CE credits by stating what needed to be included on a certificate of attendance or certificate of attendance, as well as what documents would be considered to show proof of credit.
- The Board discussed energy work. Its decision was to not allow energy work in the hands on requirement, but to allow it the "remaining hours" section. However, the board did not make any suggested WAC language proposals about this.

At this meeting, the BOM reversed itself on several topics:

- CPR was put back into the "Other category" as a possible subject, but no longer made mandatory. Also, only up to 4 hours could be counted for CE. Live and online classes will be acceptable.
- The board reversed on its discussion regarding energy work. There are at least 2 board members who are Reiki Masters. Instead of allowing it as part of the "Other" hours, energy work can be used for the hands-on requirement or "other" hours. The wording is going to be changed from, "...direct application of massage therapy as defined in RCW 18.108.010." to some verbiage about "being reasonably related to massage". While the BOM supported this, both the public and Brandon Williams, the DOH Massage Program Specialist, had issues with it not being specific enough to enforce. Also there are issues if the BOM mix changes and they do not support energy work then the word "reasonable" could be interpreted differently and people who took energy work for CE would then be denied the use of it.
- The BOM confirmed it wanted to keep the 12-hour hands-on requirement and 8-hour "other" category.
- The BOM confirmed that it would keep proposed information in regarding what is required to show proof of attendance.

Here is the current breakdown of CE hours:

- 12 hours minimum direct supervised massage skills training
- 4 hours minimum ethics
- 8 remaining hours may consist of live class, self study, teaching a course for the first time, business and management courses, CPR, distance service, active service on massage related boards or committees

**Tools:** No further discussion was made about tools.

**Breast Massage:** The BOM cleared up inconsistencies on what consent was required, but it did not specify how often it was required. Both Barbara Helynn Heard and Aubrey Lesicki presented in the public comment section that separating breast tissue from areola from nipple on paper was less than perfect as in giving a breast massage there really was no way not to touch the full breast, so to talk about individual parts in the law was an issue. Also, it made for an awkward conversation with clients, when really a person was there for "breast massage" not "areola" or "nipple" massage. It appears the BOM may take this into consideration at future meetings.

**Perineal Area Massage:** To everyone one who reads this section, we are referring to massage in this area as either "massage of the perineal area" or "perineal area massage". The use of the term "perineal massage" is already spoken for by the birthing community where this term refers to massage of 1-2 inches of the vagina wall and the perineum to prepare the pliability of this tissue for birthing.

There was a lot of feedback to the BOM by the structural bodywork community about allowing massage in the perineal area. Prior to the May BOM meeting, WSMTA presented a memo to the board about massage of this area that the structural bodywork and other public members were able to get behind and support in unity. Each supporter had minor changes it wanted, but the framework of the proposed language was

supported by all. The BOM seemed open to accepting of this framework (to include the suggestion that the number of CE hours not be specified) but determined that it would work out the wording in the next board meeting.

In the remainder of the meeting, the BOM and DOH members were educated on how to properly report their travel related expenses. Also, Megan Maxey attended an FSMTB (Federation of State Massage Therapy Boards) meeting. She reported that the national average pass rate of the MBLEx was 73% and that WA state had one of the highest pass rates of 85%.

Finally, several BOM meeting dates were changed. The new September and November dates are:

- September 21
- November 9