

Canadian Therapist Invited to Present at Cancer Centre

In November, Canadian RMT Paul Lewis was invited to present a three-hour workshop on massage for post-surgical mastectomy cancer patients at the Hollings Cancer Center of the Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston, South Carolina.

Founded in 1993 and named for former U.S. senator and South Carolina governor Ernest “Fritz” Hollings, the cancer centre serves a culturally and socioeconomically diverse state whose populations experience unique and urgent disparities in cancer incidence and mortality. As the state’s foremost cancer treatment and research centre, Hollings unites more than 150 experts in treatment, research, education, prevention and control, and outreach to address South Carolina’s significant cancer problem. The centre’s resources extend throughout South Carolina via partnerships with other health-care organizations, ensuring that all patients in the state have access to its innovative and compassionate care. In 2009, the Hollings Cancer Center received U.S. National Cancer Institute designation on the basis of its research and treatment programs.

Paul Falkowski, an LMT in Charleston, is the owner and director of Integrative Cancer Care at Hollings Cancer Center. This non-profit initiative focuses on support services and products, including massage therapy, to meet the physical and emotional needs of cancer patients and their families. He heard about Paul Lewis’ innovative approaches to post-mastectomy therapy and invited Lewis to speak at the cancer centre in November.

“Its always good to learn from each other as life is a learning process”, says Falkowski.

The presentation focused on bringing together assessment and treatment techniques to address post-surgical mastectomy issues such as restricted range of motion and thoracic outlet syndrome. Advanced upper-body treatment with a focus on engagement techniques using Dynamic Angular Petrissage (DAP) was introduced and demonstrated. Topics discussed and techniques demonstrated included: client comfort and care; assessment techniques; use of hydrotherapy; segmental stretching; myofascial treatment techniques; joint mobilizations and draping for client comfort.

Lewis notes, “The lecture went well and a few scientists asked my opinion on massage with respect to their specific research. Also, with the collaboration of Mr. Falkowski, I was able to expand further on the lecture by treating both a post-surgical mastectomy patient and a chemotherapy-induced peripheral neuropathy client while I was at the centre. A laser Doppler method was utilized to measure superficial blood flow on each client before and after each treatment. With the help of researcher Dr. Joan Cunningham, we will be writing up our findings. Dr. Cunningham, LMT Paul Falkowski and their team of researchers are using this method in their investigation of massage therapy to greatly reduce symptoms of



Paul Lewis, RMT, lecturing at the Hollings Cancer Centre in South Carolina



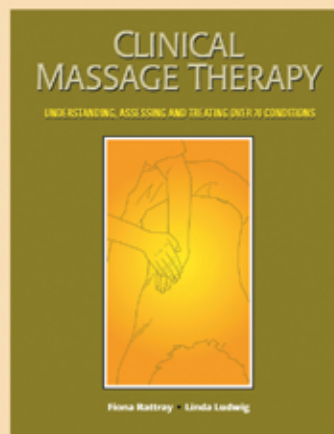
Paul Lewis RMT with Paul Falkowski LMT

chemotherapy-induced peripheral neuropathy. It was a great opportunity to see their work.”

Lewis teaches and works with clients in North America, Europe and Japan. His post-mastectomy patients derive much benefit from his work.

Candice, a double mastectomy cancer survivor, writes, “I recently had the good fortune to participate in two sessions with Paul Lewis for longstanding range of motion issues in my left shoulder caused by surgery. Having tried everything

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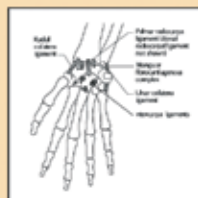
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in both Eastern and Western medicine, I jumped at the chance to be a part of this treatment. Expecting very little based on every other treatment modality tried to date, I was very much surprised and relieved. Paul has a method of massage that I have never experienced before – he uses your own body for resistance and movement to work muscles and goes deep into muscle groups for optimum results. While his methods are painful at times, the end result is well worth the discomfort. In the course of two sessions, my range of motion improved and level of pain decreased. This method should be a must for all massage professionals who work with surgical patients to get them on their feet and moving sooner than later. I only wish that I had met him a year ago.”

And from England, cancer survivor Lynn writes, “Since my surgery, I have had minimal hands-on bodywork, partly due to insecurities about my body after surgery and partly due to not wanting to trust therapists.

“I heard about Paul Lewis and his approach to treating mobility issues relating to post mastectomy and reconstruction surgery. I felt I would be in safe hands even before we met. His manner, knowledge and care put me totally at ease, and the treatment from start to finish was totally sensitive and holistic. He looked at my body as a whole, which was something that none of the doctors at the hospital did. His treatment did not just cover the post-surgical breast area but also my legs, buttocks; stomach, back, arms, shoulders, even the face. All areas that were connected in some way to the surgeries and procedures I have undergone in the past two and half years.

“After the therapeutic massage I felt physically rejuvenated, muscles and joints relaxed and emotionally nurtured. I also felt a new level of acceptance of my body, having exposed it to someone who was not my doctor.

“Overall I think it is wise to have massage from someone who is knowledgeable on the subject and who has treated many others in similar situations. A therapist who understands physically, emotionally and holistically can be a very powerful and healing experience. Also, although the massage was relaxing, it felt deep and the fact that Paul treats the body as a whole helped me to re-integrate myself and revisit areas I felt previously blocked. I no longer view my body in two parts, areas directly affected and other areas.”

Lynn’s experience with massage therapy may be a prime example of the affects on the physical and also the indirect impact massage could have on the emotional and psychological state of a patient.

Lewis notes, “Involvement with clients such as these is a way to expand massage therapy’s scope of benefit, and participation in research enhances our credibility while increasing our knowledge with respect to the techniques we use. This can only lead to benefits for our clients in our practices.”