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Introduction

Dynamics of the massage therapy profession

The 2014 Massage Profession Research Report

Welcome to the 7th annual Massage Profession Research Report, AMTA's collection and analysis of current market data and trends that impact the massage therapy profession.

AMTA develops this report to provide massage therapy practitioners with up-to-date information and research to help them make knowledgeable business decisions. This report is a major AMTA Member benefit that helps you scan the current market (including consumers, therapists and schools) without a large investment of resources and time.

Four Annual Research Studies

In the pages that follow, you’ll find results of four benchmark surveys that track the state of the profession through 2013:

- The AMTA Consumer Survey (17th annual) was commissioned by AMTA to poll American adults on their use of massage therapy. (Confidence level of plus or minus three percent.)
- The AMTA Industry Survey (9th annual) provided feedback from massage therapists on everything from compensation, to hours, to type of work environment. (Confidence level of plus or minus three percent.)
- The AMTA Technology Survey (5th annual) obtained input from massage therapists about their use of digital technology for individual and professional purposes. (Confidence level of plus or minus four percent.)
- The AMTA Massage School Survey (7th annual) acquired feedback from schools with 500-plus hour programs. (Confidence level of plus or minus twelve percent.)

This report provides timely and relevant data on the state of the massage profession, compiled from the results of these surveys and supplemented by U.S. government statistics and information found in industry and/or business publications. (For methodology, see the Appendix.)
Executive Summary

As in years past, the massage therapy marketplace continues to be affected by the challenging economic environment. Although consumers continue to strongly believe in the efficacy of massage therapy, few consumers are getting massage. Therapists report that they are working similar hours as last year.

Here is a summary of key findings for each section of this report.

Consumers of Massage Therapy
The percentage of adult American consumers who received a massage was stagnant at 16 percent in 2013, the same as 2012 and the average number of massages obtained went from 4.2 in 2012 to 4.1 in 2013. Approximately 34.9 million people had a total of 143 million massages in 2013, a 1.3 percent decline from the 145 million massages consumed in the U.S. by 34.5 million people in 2012. Although most age groups saw declines in use in 2013, those 18 to 35 and those 55-64 did see slight increases.

Consumers continue to believe in the efficacy of massage as 88 percent consider massage to be effective in reducing pain and 88 percent believe massage can be beneficial to health and wellness. The primary reason consumers obtained massage continues to be for medical purposes – pain relief, soreness/stiffness and recovery from injury - with 43 percent of massage consumers getting massage for these reasons.

The Massage Therapy Profession
On average, massage therapists worked 21.2 hours per week in 2013, similar to the 21.6 hours per week in 2012. Massage therapists saw an average of 43 clients each month in 2013, up from 41 clients per month in 2012. Gross annual income from massage therapy also increased to $21,871 per year in 2013 versus $20,789 in 2012.

Between 2012 and 2013, the estimated number of massage therapists grew by 4 percent to 319,870. The number of massage therapists has increased 47 percent over the past ten years but the number has increased only 11 percent in the past five years indicating a slowing of growth in the number of therapists. Most massage therapists continue to be female (88 percent), had a different profession prior to becoming a therapist (82 percent), have formal education beyond a high school diploma (88 percent) and are sole practitioners (62 percent).

The biggest professional challenges reported by massage therapists continue to be industry perception (being recognized / respected as health care professionals and public awareness of massage therapy profession), and business / economy issues (poor economy and maintaining steady business / finding new clients).
Health Care and the Massage Industry
The health care industry continues to offer employment opportunities for massage therapists in a variety of settings. The health care industry added 19,000 jobs per month in 2013, making it one of the fastest growing sectors of the economy.

Twenty-six percent of massage therapists reported working in a health care setting in 2013 (18 percent in a chiropractic office / integrated health care clinic and 8 percent in a hospital / medical office or clinic), slightly less than the 27 percent of therapists working in health care settings in 2012.

More massage therapists received referrals from health care professionals in 2013 than 2012 with particular increases from chiropractors and integrated health clinics (70 percent in 2013 versus 67 percent in 2012) and from other healthcare professionals (73 percent in 2013 versus 69 percent in 2012).

The growing number of referrals from health care professionals indicates increased integration of massage therapy in health care environments.

Training and Education of Massage Therapists
Massage therapy schools reported their top challenges as difficulty in attracting students and in marketing their programs, closely followed by keeping in touch with alumni. Seventy-five percent of schools reported in 2013 being accredited by nationally-recognized accrediting organizations, the same as in 2012.

All categories of schools had a median of 13-29 graduates from their programs in 2013.

Seventy-five percent of schools offered financial aid to their students in 2013, the same as in 2012. To address the difficulty that some graduates may have in obtaining employment after graduation, 91 percent of schools offered some form of job placement services to students in 2013, similar to 2012 numbers.

The attrition rate of students has also stayed similar to last year at a median of 10-20% for a given class.

We’d love to hear from you.

If you have suggestions, or identify additional information you need, please contact us anytime at research@amtamassage.org.
Section 1 — Consumers of Massage Therapy

*Consumer use of massage therapy affects the speed and dynamics of growth of the entire massage industry. How frequently, for what purpose, and at what type of locations consumers get massage affects the number of massage therapists needed as well as the types and settings for massage.*

This section provides information on the latest data and trends in the U.S. population and massage consumer use.

**Key Concerns:**
- How will shifting population demographics impact massage therapists and the massage profession?
- How can my practice connect with the populations most likely to seek massage therapy?
- How can I gear my massage practice towards the markets most likely to grow?
- How are massage franchise chains changing the massage marketplace?

**Key Findings:**
- Sixteen percent of adult American consumers received a massage in 2013, the same percent as 2012.
- U.S. population growth is slowing and becoming more diverse.
- Consumers continue to believe in the efficacy of massage.
- People living in metropolitan areas and women are the greatest consumers of massage.
- Consumers continue to use massage for pain relief, pain management and to control headaches.
- Millennials, those between 18 and 34 years old, are becoming more frequent consumers of massage.

**These questions will be answered:**
1A. What changes are taking place in the overall U.S. population?
1B. What is the current state of the U.S. economy?
1C. What drives consumer use of massage therapy?
1D. Who gets massage?
1E. Why do consumers get massage?
1F. Where are consumers getting massage?
1A. What changes are taking place in the overall U.S. population?²

Consumers are the engine of growth in the profession. Overall population growth was very low in 2012. The greatest growth of the U.S. population is taking place in the oldest segment.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the U.S. population is growing, but at a relatively slow rate

The U.S. population grew to 317.2 million in 2013, up slightly from 316.9 million in 2012. That’s a population growth of less than one tenth of a percent. The population is projected to grow even more slowly over the next several decades as the number of births and international migrations are expected to be lower.

The U.S. population continues to age

The median age of the U.S. population increased to a new high of 37.3 years in 2012, up from 36.8 years in 2011. The increase in median age is driven by the aging baby boomer population, those born between 1946 and 1964. As shown in the table below, the median age is expected to steadily increase over the next several decades.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Median age of U.S. population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>35.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>37.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>39.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2040</td>
<td>40.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2060</td>
<td>42.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1. Median current and projected age of U.S. population

The oldest part of the population is growing the fastest

In 2012, there were 20.9 people over the age of 64 for every 100 people of working age (defined by the Census as those 16-64). This is an increased over 2011 data. Age dependency is often used to measure the youthfulness or elderliness of a country’s population. These estimates from the Census show that the over 64 sector of the US population will be increasing in quantity and dependence on the working population in the coming years.

For more information on U.S. population trends, refer to the U.S. Census Bureau data at http://www.census.gov.
Applying the Research:
1. The US population is growing at an extremely slow rate. Consider the impact this will have on the market for massage therapy and what implications this will have for your practice.
2. How will the aging population affect the modalities and equipment needs of your massage practice in the coming years?

1B. What is the current state of the U.S. economy?
Although the economy is still not fully recovered, there are indications that the health of the economy is getting better. The Federal Reserve announced in December 2013 that it would be decreasing the amount of stimulus funding to the economy, a major indicator that the US economy continues to improve. Additionally, the overall unemployment rate declined in 42 states from November 2012 through November 2013. Businesses in 43 states reported adding jobs to their payrolls. Housing sales were up almost 18 percent in October of 2013 to the highest level since 2008, indicative of an economic recovery. Home sales are predicted to increase again in 2014, and this is due to projected increases in employment figures. Additionally, 2013 saw new highs in the stock market, helping to grow investment income for many. As the economy continues to improve and consumers have more disposable income, this should help to increase the number of consumers getting massage.

1C. What drives consumer use of massage therapy?
Although the economy continues to slowly improve, the percentage of Americans getting massage stayed the same as 2012.

The 2013 AMTA Consumer Survey results show that:
- Sixteen percent of all adult Americans had at least one massage in 2013, the same percentage as 2012.
- Thirty-five percent of adults reported that they have had a professional massage in their life.
- Of those consumers that received massage in the past year, the mean number of massages decreased to 4.1 in 2013, down from 4.2 in 2012.
- In 2013, 26 percent of all adult Americans reported receiving a massage in the last five years up from 25 percent who reported receiving a massage in the past five years in 2012.
- Roughly 34.9 million people had a total of 143 million massages in 2013, compared to 34.5 million people having a total of 145 million massages in the U.S. in 2012.
- The decline in the total number of massages in the past year, from 145 million to 143 million, represents a 1.3 percent decline.
While the economy continues to slowly recover from the recession, we expect the use of massage to remain steady.

**During the past ten years**, consumer usage has moved from 21 percent in 2004 to a high of 24 percent in 2007 and then to 16 percent in 2013 (See figure 2 below).

![Consumer Use of Massage](image)

**Figure 2. Total use of massage among adult U.S. population**

**Consumers continue to believe in the efficacy of massage:**
- Eighty-eight percent of consumers agree that “Massage can be effective in reducing pain.”
- Eighty-eight percent of consumers agree that “Massage can be beneficial to your health and wellness.”
- Sixty-five percent of all consumers said they have or would recommend massage to a relative or to someone they knew in 2013.
- Twenty-eight percent of the adult population expects to get a massage in the next 12 months, the same percentage as last year.
1D. Who gets massage?

Gender, generation, education and income all affect the likelihood of consumers using massage. The greatest consumers of massage are women and those living in metropolitan areas.

Of those consumers that received massage in 2013:
- Eighty-three percent live in a metropolitan area.
- Sixty-seven percent are women.
- Fifty-six percent don’t have a child under 18 living in their household.
- Fifty-seven percent earn more than $50,000 per year.
- Forty percent are college graduates.
- Fifty-five percent are 44 years of age or younger.

Metropolitan residents - Eighty-three percent of massage consumers resided in a metropolitan area.
- Of all adult residents of a metropolitan area, 17 percent got a massage in 2013, compared to 16 percent in 2012. Additionally, metropolitan dwellers received 4.4 massages on average in a year, up from 4.3 massages in 2012.

Women – Sixty-seven percent of all massages in 2013 were received by women, down from 69 percent in 2012.
- Twenty-one percent of adult women got at least one massage in 2013, slightly less than 2012, when 22 percent of women got at least one massage.
- The mean number of massages women received in 2013 was 4.2 massages. This is considerably less than the 7.6 massages women received in 2009, and slightly lower than the 2012 average of 4.3 massages.
- Men received fewer massages on average than women, 3.2 massages compared to 4.2 massages for women.
- Eleven percent of men had a massage in 2013, up from 10 percent in 2012.
Households without children - Fifty-six percent of all massage consumers did not have a child under 18 years old in their home in 2013.
  - Usage among households with no children was 15 percent in 2013 up from 14 percent in 2012.

Household Income – Twenty-seven percent of all massage consumers had a household income of $100,000 or more.
  - Twenty-three percent of those that have household income between $75,000 and $100,000 received a massage in 2013, down from 30 percent of those with household income between $75,000 and $100,000 in 2012.
  - Sixteen percent of those that have household income between $35,000 and $50,000 got a massage in 2013. Eighteen percent of this household income group received a massage in 2012.

College graduates – Forty percent of massage consumers were college graduates.
  - Twenty-four percent of college graduates received a massage in 2013 compared to 22 percent in 2012. College graduates on average received 4.5 massages in 2013 compared to 4.9 massages in 2012.

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<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Completed college</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3. Total use of massage among U.S. population by gender

Figure 4. Total use of massage among college graduates
Those 18 to 34 years old – Thirty-five percent of massage consumers were between 18 and 34 years old.

- Eighteen percent of this group received a massage in 2013 compared to 14 percent in 2012.
- On average, this group received 4.0 massages in 2013, up from 2.3 massages in 2012.

Gen-Xers – Nineteen percent of massage consumers were between 35 and 44 years old.

- Eighteen percent of those between 35 and 44 years old received a massage in 2013, a tie for the highest percentage of any other age group. Last year 23 percent of this age group received a massage.
- This age group received an average of 4.5 massages a year in 2013, down from 5.4 in 2012.

Baby boomers - Thirty-eight percent of massage consumers were baby boomers, between 45 and 64 years old.

- The same percentage of baby boomers received massage in 2013 as 2012, at 17 percent.
- Seventeen percent of those 45 to 54 years old received massage in 2013 compared to 19 percent in 2012. However, those 45 to 54 years old received more massages in 2013, 4.5 on average, than in 2012 when they received 4.2 massages.
- Seventeen percent of those 55 to 64 years old received massage in 2013, more than in 2012 when 15 percent said they received massage in the past year. This group also received fewer massages on average in 2013, 4.6 massages compared to 5.2 massages in 2012.

Seniors – Eight percent of massage consumers were 65 years or older.

- Seven percent of seniors received a massage in 2013 compared to 10 percent last year.
- On average, seniors consumers received massage the least, at 3.0 massages per year in 2013.

Applying the Research:

1. The demographics of the typical massage consumer are: female, college educated, and has a household income of over $50,000 a year. This has not changed dramatically in the past several years. Research the demographics of your area to see how they match up against the demographics of the typical massage consumer.

2. Younger consumers are increasing their use of massage. What opportunities and challenges does this present for new massage therapists?
1E. Why do consumers get massage?

The primary reason consumers get massage continues to be for medical reasons – pain relief, soreness/stiffness and recovery from injury.

![Figure 5. Primary reasons for receiving last massage in 2013](image)

**Medical Reasons – The same percentage of** massage consumers got a massage for medical reasons in 2013 as in 2012 – 43 percent.

- Fifty-five percent of men and 36 percent of woman who received a massage in 2013 did so for medical reasons.
- Fifty-six percent of massage consumers who had a high school degree or less got a massage for a medical reason in 2013.
- Forty-nine percent of massage consumers who earn less than $35,000 per year or more got a massage for a medical reason in 2013.
- Forty-eight percent of massage consumers 45 or older got a massage for a medical reason in 2013.

**The top medical reasons for getting a massage in 2013 were:**

- **Pain relief/pain management** - Nineteen percent of massage consumers received a massage in 2013 for pain relief/pain management, the same as in 2012.
  - Thirty-two percent of those 45 years of age and older got their last massage for pain relief. Of those 45 to 54 years of age, 40 percent got their last massage for pain management.
• Of women getting a massage in 2013, 15 percent received their last massage for pain relief/pain management, compared to 28 percent of men who had their last massage for pain related reasons.

• The number of Americans that ever used massage therapy for pain relief was 24 percent in 2013 down from 29 percent in 2012.

• For soreness/stiffness/spasms – Fourteen percent of massage consumers got their last massage for soreness/stiffness/spasms in 2013, compared to 13 percent in 2012.
  o Sixteen percent of male massage consumers received a massage for soreness/stiffness/spasms in 2012, down from 18 percent in 2012.
  o Twenty-two percent of seniors (65+) who received a massage in 2013 got their last massage for soreness/stiffness/spasms, up from 13 percent in 2012.

• Injury recovery/rehabilitation - 7 percent of massage consumers got a massage for injury recovery/rehabilitation down from 9 percent in 2012.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Americans’ beliefs about medical applications of massage</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Massage can be effective in reducing pain.</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massage can be beneficial to health and wellness.</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 6. Americans’ belief about massage in 2013

Relaxation/stress reduction – Thirty-two percent of massage consumers got a massage for relaxation/stress reduction in 2013, the same percent as 2012.*

• Forty percent of massage consumers who are college graduates got a massage for relaxation/stress in 2013, down from 43 percent a year ago.
• Forty-four percent of massage consumers in households with three or more people had their last massage for relaxation/stress reduction.
• Fifty-five percent of massage consumers who have a child less than 13 years of age got their last massage for relation/stress reduction reasons.
• Thirty-seven percent of female massage consumers got a massage for relaxation/stress in 2013, up from 35 percent in 2012.

*For purposes of this report, relaxation and stress relief were not included under medical reasons for massage.
Pampering/just to feel good/special indulgence - Sixteen percent of massage consumers received their last massage for pampering/just to feel good/special indulgence in 2013, up from 12 percent as reported in 2012.

- Eighteen percent of women who received a massage did so for pampering reasons in 2013, up from 15 percent in 2012.
- Fourteen percent of men who received a massage did so for pampering reasons in 2013, up from 7 percent in 2012.
- Twenty-seven percent of seniors, those 65 years of age and up received their last massage for pampering reasons.

Applying the Research:
1. Male consumers used massage for medical reasons in 2013 more than women. How can you use this information to help boost your massage practice?
2. How do you market massage services differently to consumers who view it as a special indulgence as compared to consumers who view massage as part of a healthcare regimen?
1F. Where are consumers getting massage?

The most popular place to receive a massage continues to be at a Spa.

Seventeen percent of consumers in 2013 reported receiving their last massage at a spa. The percent of people reporting that they had their last massage in a spa has declined the past several years, but spa has always been the most popular place consumers receive a massage. The next most popular locations to receive massage were massage therapist’s office/location, chiropractor’s office, hotel/resort/cruise, massage chain, and beauty salon. (See Figure 7.)

Spas – Seventeen percent of all massage consumers received their last massage at a spa in 2013, down from 19 percent in 2012.

- Twenty-two percent of female massage consumers got a massage at a spa in 2013 compared to 27 percent in 2012.
- Only seven percent of male massage consumers got a massage at a spa in 2013, but this is up from 2 percent in 2012.
**Massage Therapist’s office/location** - Fifteen percent of massage consumers received their last massage at a massage therapist’s office/location in 2013 versus 14 percent of consumers in 2012.

- Twenty-four percent of massage therapy consumers who earn less than $35,000 a year received their last massage at massage therapist’s office/location in 2013.
- Twenty percent of men who got a massage in 2013 got their last massage at a massage therapist’s office/location, compared to 25 percent last year. Thirteen percent of women massage recipients in 2013 received their last massage at a massage therapist’s office, up from 9 percent last year.

**Your home or at the home of someone you know** – Only 6 percent of massage consumers received their last massage at their home or at the home of someone they knew in 2012, compared to 11 percent in 2012 and 13 percent in 2011.

- Older baby-boomer massage consumers, aged 55 to 64 were most likely to have their last massage at their home or the home of someone they know, with 17 percent doing so in 2013.
- Those massage consumers with a household income between $75,000 and $100,000 were most likely to have a massage in their home or the home of someone they know, with 15 percent having their last massage in this setting in 2013.

**Massage Chains** - The percentage of massage consumers that received a massage at a massage franchise chain was 7 percent in 2013, down from 10 percent in 2012. Note that some consumers may not distinguish between a massage chain and a spa.

- Nine percent of women and three percent of men had their last massage in a massage chain in 2013.

**Beauty Salons** – Eight percent of consumers got their last massage at a beauty salon in 2013, down from 10 percent in 2012.

- Sixteen percent of massage consumers aged 18-34 had their last massage in a beauty salon, the highest percent of any age group.
- Eight percent of female massage consumers received their last massage at a beauty salon in 2013, down from twelve percent in 2012. Virtually no males reported that they had received their last massage at a salon.

**Applying the Research:**

1. Spas are the primary location for receiving a massage, with use of spas among men growing over 2012. How does the spa experience set the standard for consumer expectations? How can you use this to your advantage?
2. Think creatively about how your work setting can affect the clientele you attract, and how to market your practice to new demographics.
Section 2 — The Massage Therapy Profession

Staying current about the latest trends in the massage profession helps you by giving you the best information on which to make decisions regarding your massage therapy career.

This section covers information regarding the massage therapy industry including employment, income and work settings.

Key Concerns:
How are you prepared to respond to changes occurring in the massage profession due to economic and demographic shifts affecting those who receive massage? Are you informed about compensation, hours and requirements of various work settings, etc.?

Key Findings:
- Most massage therapists are women, previously worked in another profession, and they practice a wide array of modalities.
- Average hourly earnings vary greatly based on massage setting. Therapists working in their clients’ homes earned the most at $69.86 per hour.
- Massage therapists view industry perceptions and the economy as their top challenges.
- Referrals from current clients continue to be the most prevalent way consumers find massage therapists.
- Most massage therapists describe themselves as sole practitioners.
- Massage Envy is the largest employer of massage therapists with roughly 900 locations in 48 states.

These questions will be answered:
2A. Who is practicing massage therapy?
2B. How much are massage therapists compensated for their work?
2C. What are some of the biggest challenges facing massage therapists?
2D. Where are massage therapists practicing?
2E. Technology and the massage practice
2F. What’s the latest on the spa industry and massage therapy?
2G. What impact are national massage chains having on the profession?
2A. Who is practicing massage therapy?

Over the last decade, the number of practicing massage therapists increased by 47 percent.

According to the 2013 AMTA Industry Survey, massage therapists in the U.S. are:

- **Mostly female** — Eighty-eight percent of massage therapists are women, which is a slightly higher percentage than last year.

- **Have a median age of 44 years old** — The median age of a massage therapist has gone up slightly in the past year. This may be a reflection of more experienced therapists being able to sustain their careers in the economic downturn.

![Figure 8. Age of Massage Therapists](image)

- **Educated** — Thirty-two percent of massage therapists have a Bachelor’s Degree or higher and 88 percent have achieved formal education levels above a high school diploma or GED. This has been fairly consistent over the past several years. (See Figure 9 below.)
### Education (Non-Massage)

<table>
<thead>
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<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High school grad or less</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate’s Degree</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical/vocational certificate</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s degree</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>24%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Master’s degree</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 9. Massage therapist’s profile

**Most massage therapists are coming from another profession**

- Sole practitioners and contractors are most likely to have had a different occupation prior to becoming a massage therapist. (See Figure 10 for more information).
- Therapists working as employees are comparatively more likely to enter massage therapy as their first profession. These types of work settings may attract younger candidates with less prior work experience.

### Was massage therapy your first career?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>First career</th>
<th>Not first career</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sole Practitioners</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contractor</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full time employee</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part time employee</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total for all Massage Therapists</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 10. Was massage therapy your first career choice?
The number of massage therapists in the U.S. has grown over the last decade.

Over the past ten years, the estimated number of massage therapists has increased 47 percent.

Between 2012 and 2013, the number of estimated massage therapists grew by four percent to 319,870. The majority of growth in the profession is coming from licensed states. Note that even though a massage therapist is licensed to practice, many therapists drop out of the profession, retire, or are temporarily not practicing, yet they are still on the books as a licensed therapist. This group may account for up to twelve percent of all massage therapists.

The following chart illustrates the growth of the total estimated number of massage therapists over time.

**Figure 11. Total number of massage therapists in the US**

**Highlights from Figure 11:**

In 2013 there were approximately 319,870 massage therapists in the United States, which is up from 307,104 therapists in 2012.

*LMT: licensed massage therapists, MT: massage therapists from non-licensing states*
Applying the Research:
1. How does the increase in licensed massage therapists benefit current and future massage therapists, and the entire profession?
2. What skills have you acquired in other careers that can help you in the field of massage therapy?

2B. How much are massage therapists compensated for their work?
Massage therapists’ compensation per hour increased from 2011 to 2012.

How much are clients paying for massage?
• In 2012, clients paid an average of $64.98 for one hour of massage, an increase of $3.38 from 2011.
• Hotels, resorts and cruises charged clients the most, an average of $97.36 per hour.
• Therapists working out of their homes charged the least, an average of $57.46 per hour.

Average hourly earnings of massage therapists increased in the past year
Therapists working in their client’s homes made the most, an average of $69.89 per hour. Those working in massage only franchises and chains made the least, an average of $20.39 per hour.

Massage therapists earned tips at about the same frequency in 2012 as in 2011. Thirty-seven percent of therapists reported receiving tips 80-100% of the time in 2012 versus 36 percent in 2011.

Figure 12. Average 2012 hourly pay and tips for massage therapists by work setting.
**Average income from massage therapy is increasing**

Massage therapists are making more income from massage as can be seen in the table below. Note that income varies greatly by type of practice, as well as geographic region.

![Gross Annual Income](image.png)

**Figure 13. 2012 Gross annual income from massage therapy**

Massage therapy comprised 73 percent of the typical therapist’s household income for 2013.

Fifty-three percent of therapists earned all of their income for the year from massage therapy.

**Massage therapists are working similar hours than last year**

On average, **massage therapists worked 21.2 hours per week in 2013**, about the same as 2012. But, sole practitioners, contractors, and full-time employees worked more than the average number of hours for the year. Fifty-four percent of massage therapists would like to work more hours in massage therapy. This is up slightly from fifty-two percent wanting to work more hours in 2012.

Massage **therapists were paid for 18.1 of the 21.2** average hours they worked per week in 2013, or 85 percent of the time they spent at work.

**Health benefits stayed the same in 2013**

Massage therapists were about as likely to receive health benefits from their employers in 2013 as they were in 2012. Twenty-six percent of full-time employees receive health benefits and nine percent of part-time employees receive health benefits.
Massage therapists continued to depend heavily on repeat clients
In 2013, massage therapists saw an average of 43 clients each month, similar to 2012 numbers. Repeat clients made up 72 percent of massage therapists’ appointments in 2013 with new clients comprising the remaining 28 percent, essentially the same as last year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total Clients (#)</th>
<th>% New Clients</th>
<th>% Repeat Clients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sole Practitioner</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contractor</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full time employee</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part time employee</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 14. New and repeat clients seen by massage therapists

Highlights from Figure 14:
The majority of clients that massage therapists see in a month are repeat clients (72 percent).

Full time employees see the most clients of all work settings over the course of a month (71 clients per month).

Where consumers find massage therapists and therapists find clients.
Massage therapists obtain clients from many sources. In 2013, both massage therapists and their clients cited referrals as the primary method they used to locate each other. See Figure 15 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% of consumers find therapists via this medium</th>
<th>% of therapists who promote via this medium</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Referrals by clients</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet/websites</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community/local events</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locator service</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 15: Where consumers found therapists and where therapists promoted their services.
As shown in Figure 16, massage therapists are referring clients to each other with increased frequency.

**Figure 16. Frequency of receiving referrals from other massage therapists**

**Massage business continued to improve for sole practitioners and independent contractors**
Fifty-five percent of sole practitioners and independent contractors indicated that their business improved in 2013, continuing an upward trend since 2010. Only 16 percent reported their business had declined over the past year.

**Applying the Research:**
1. Staying on top of pay trends in different work settings can help you negotiate your pay in the massage industry.
2. Make a plan to obtain and retain core repeat clients, whose appointments make up about ¾ of a massage therapist’s work schedule.
3. More massage therapists are referring clients to one another, and with greater frequency than seen in previous years. Make sure to network with other massage therapists in your area.
2C. What are some of the biggest challenges facing massage therapists?

In 2013, massage therapists cited industry perception and business/economy issues equally as their biggest professional challenges.

*Massage therapists are affected by the perception of their industry*

- Massage therapists continued to want to be recognized and respected as health care professionals and to seek more public awareness of the massage therapy profession to improve the industry’s reputation.
- The struggling economy continued to affect massage therapists as well.
- Figure 17 below lists the top challenges reported by massage therapists overall and by work setting.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Sole Practitioner</th>
<th>Contractor</th>
<th>Full Time Employee</th>
<th>Part Time Employee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Industry Perceptions</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being recognized / respected as health care professionals, public awareness</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Business/Economy Issues</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor economy, maintaining steady business / finding new clients, licensing</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Job Factors</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoiding personal injury, low income, finding/maintaining employment</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education Issues</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshop costs / finding CE classes, standards of education / training inequalities</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 17. Largest challenges facing massage therapists*

**Applying the Research:**

1. With industry perception the biggest challenge for massage therapists, what can you do to educate consumers about the benefits of massage?

2. Network with other small business owners in your area to discuss business challenges and how you are each overcoming them.
2D. Where are massage therapists practicing?

*Massage therapists tend to work in multiple settings and most describe themselves as sole practitioners.*

**AMTA’s research on the massage industry in 2013 shows that massage therapists:**
- Continued to travel to their clients’ homes to provide massage. Massage provided in the client’s home increased to 49 percent in 2013, the third year this setting topped the list.
- Provided massage in their offices as well. This number dropped slightly to 38 percent in 2013, as compared with 39 percent in 2012.
- Did not provide massage out of their homes as frequently. Massages provided in therapists’ homes decreased to 35 percent in 2013, down from 36 percent in 2012.
- Results of the 2013 AMTA Industry Survey and information from other sources indicated 6 percent (+ or – a few percent) of massage therapists work in massage-therapy only franchises or chains.

See Figure 18 for the visual representation of this data.

![Figure 18. Massage therapists’ work settings in 2013](image-url)

Massage therapists work in many different employment arrangements. The chart below shows the most common employment types of massage therapists.
Highlights of Figure 19: Over 60 percent of massage therapists describe themselves as sole practitioners. Full-time employees comprise the smallest group of massage therapists.

Massage therapists worked similar hours in 2013 as 2012
The average work week of massage therapists was 21.2 hours in 2013, down slightly from 21.6 hours in 2012. Fifteen of those hours, or 71 percent, were spent performing massage. The other 6.2 hours were spent on marketing, performing general business tasks and other tasks. Massage therapists said their ideal work week would be 33 hours, an increase of 12 hours from their current work week. See Figure 20 for more details.
Applying the Research:
1. How can your work experience and skills learned in one work setting carry over to another?
2. Track your workdays over the course of several weeks to see how much time you spend on marketing, business tasks, and other tasks in addition to giving massage.
2E. Technology and the Massage Practice

Over the past several years, massage therapists have integrated various components of technology into their massage practices. The frequency and degree of integration has increased over time. Some massage therapists use technology for nearly every aspect of their practice, including appointment scheduling, processing payments, playing music during massage sessions, running a massage practice website, social media for communicating with clients and other therapists, online continuing education courses, and many other uses. Some massage therapists only use technology for one or two aspects of their practice; however, many are realizing how much easier technology can make managing their practice.

Devices used by Massage Therapists in their practices

Fifty-six percent of massage therapists browse the internet more than once a day, fifty-two percent use search engines for research more than once a day, and thirty percent use instant messaging more than once a day.

Fifty-seven percent of massage therapists have websites for their practices, and an additional fifteen percent say they plan to get one within the next year.
Fifty-seventy percent of massage therapists who accept credit cards as payment process these transactions using the Square mobile credit card reader, which requires a web-enabled smartphone to use.

Seventy-four percent of massage therapists own a web-enabled smartphone. An additional three percent say they plan to get one within the next year. The table below shows the breakdown of smartphones’ functions, and how often massage therapists use their phones for these functions.
Breakdown of % time Massage Therapists use Smartphones for different functions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Mostly for Practice Use</th>
<th>Mostly for Personal Use</th>
<th>Use for both</th>
<th>Plan to use in future</th>
<th>Do not use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phone calls</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texting</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Browsing the Internet</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geolocation/Navigation services</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using applications</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening to music</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video calls or chats</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Send or receive email</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 23. Massage therapists’ use of smartphones.

Massage therapists use a variety of social media for both professional and personal reasons. The table below shows which sites are used for which purposes.

**Social Media Use by Massage Therapists**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Media</th>
<th>Mostly for Practice Use</th>
<th>Mostly for Personal Use</th>
<th>Use for both</th>
<th>Plan to use in future</th>
<th>Do not use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LinkedIn</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pinterest</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Google+</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 24. Social media used by massage therapists
Massage therapists use social media sites for a variety of different reasons, both professional and personal. The table below shows the main reasons.

**Why Massage Therapists use Social Media**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Keep in touch with friends and family</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Find old friends or coworkers</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep in touch with clients</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Network with other massage therapists for business purposes</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote massage practice</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catch up on news</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 25. Reasons massage therapists use social media*

**Applying the Research:**

1. More massage therapists are integrating technology into their practices in new and innovative ways. How do you use technology in your everyday work?

2. A website is a crucial marketing tool that contributes heavily to the success of massage businesses. If you do not currently have a website for your practice, AMTA has a free 5-page website available to members to help you get started.
2F. What’s the latest on the spa industry and massage therapy?\textsuperscript{8}

According to the ISPA 2013 U.S. Industry Study covering 2012 activity, spa visits and revenue increased over 2011, showing a continued rebound in the spa industry that started in 2009.

**Spa visits increased in 2012**
- Spa visits increased 2.8 percent from 2011 to 2012.
- Spa industry revenue reached $14 billion in 2012.
- Revenue per spa establishment increased 4.1 percent from 2011 to 2012 but is still 32 percent below 2001 numbers, when the revenue was $1.024 million per establishment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Estimated spa visits</th>
<th>Estimated spa industry revenue</th>
<th>Spa revenue per establishment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>160 million</td>
<td>12.8 billion</td>
<td>$ 601,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>143 million</td>
<td>12.3 billion</td>
<td>$ 594,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>150 million</td>
<td>12.8 billion</td>
<td>$ 642,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>156 million</td>
<td>13.4 billion</td>
<td>$ 673,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>160 million</td>
<td>14.0 billion</td>
<td>$ 701,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 26. Information on spa revenue and visits*

**The number of spa locations increased for the first time since 2008**

The number of spa locations increased by 110 locations from 2011 to 2012, the first increase since the recession began in 2008. (See Figure 27).

*Figure 27. Growth in Spa Locations (US)*
Other findings regarding the spa industry:

- Average visits per spa establishment continued to increase, to 8,040 in 2012 from 7,859 in 2011. This is a 2.3 percent increase.
- Total employment in the spa industry as a whole increased 1.2 percent to 343,600 in May 2013, from 339,400 in May 2012. Growth in part-time employment was 13.2 percent over this time period, and full-time employment dropped 7.2 percent over this period.
- Eighty-eight percent of spas offered massage services in 2012, a drop from 92 percent in 2011.
- Fifty-eight percent of spas have unstaffed positions for massage therapists.

Massage therapists’ employment in spas is up slightly

- AMTA research shows that twenty-six percent of massage therapists worked in spas or salons in 2013, up from 25 percent in 2012, but down from 29 percent in 2011.

Note that the 2013 AMTA Industry Survey references 2013 data while the ISPA 2013 U.S. Spa Industry Study references 2012 data.

Applying the Research:

1. Consumers are visiting spas more frequently. Consider how this upward trend in activity is beneficial for all massage therapists, not just those working in spas.
2. More than half of spas said they have unstaffed positions for massage therapists. If you’re new to the industry or looking to make a change in work setting, search AMTA’s Job Bank for open positions in spas, as well as other workplace settings.
2G. What impact are national massage chains having on the profession?

*Results of the 2013 AMTA Industry Survey indicate national chains continued to expand and provide steady employment and work experience for many massage therapists.*

**National massage chains continued to expand and diversify their services**

National massage chains have been growing for the past several years. In 2013, this growth continued, with most major massage chains opening new locations.

Per the 2013 Consumer study, 25 percent of consumers had a massage at a franchise or chain in the past 12 months. Seven percent of consumers stated they had their last massage in a franchise or chain. In the 2012 survey, 23 percent of consumers who received a massage in the past 12 months reported that they received a massage in a franchise or chain. Note that some consumers may not realize the difference between a spa and a national massage chain.

Six percent of massage therapists worked at a national massage chain in 2013, up from 5 percent in 2012. Here again, some therapists may report that they work in a spa as opposed to a franchise or chain.

**The main players in the massage chain market include:**

**Massage Envy** was established in Arizona in 2002, and has grown to over 910 locations in 48 states. Franchises sell a membership model where individuals can sign-up to get massages every month. Massage Envy is the largest employer of massage therapists in the country, with about 25,000 employees. Massage Envy offers an annual membership for $59 per month which includes a 50-minute massage. Currently, there are roughly 1.4 million members that have signed up for this program. Massage Envy Spa locations also offer therapeutic facials for just $10 more than a massage session. The corporation just granted its 1,200th franchise license in 2013, and seeks to continue to expand across the nation in the coming years.

**Elements Therapeutic Massage** has 159 locations in 34 states, with an additional 22 locations scheduled to open soon. Elements’ Wellness program carries a monthly fee of $59 at most locations, which includes one hour-long massage, and members receive discounts of at least $20 on each additional massage. Other Wellness program benefits include the ability to roll-over unused massage sessions, the ability to pass on monthly massages to a family member or significant other, and online members-only specials. Non-member pricing for a one-hour massage is approximately $89.

**Massage Heights** originated in San Antonio, Texas in 2004. The company had 112 locations in twenty states and Canada. The company has a similar membership model to Massage Envy as members pay a rate of $49.99 per month at most locations for one
50-minute massage. Additional massages can be purchased for $39.99, which is half off the non-member rate.

There are dozens of other franchise concepts in the massage market that have developed over the past several years.

**Applying the Research:**
1. Massage franchises are able to get consumers to sign up for multiple sessions using their membership model. How can you adapt this model to your own practice to encourage repeat visits from clients?

If you have suggestions or identify additional information you need, please contact us at research@amtamassage.org.
Section 3 — Health Care and the Massage Profession

Consumers continue to increase their use of massage for medical reasons. As the health care industry continues to grow, health care providers are more commonly viewing massage therapy as a legitimate option to address health concerns.

This section discusses dynamics of the health care industry and the participation of massage therapists in the industry.

Key Concerns:
- How is massage therapy being affected by the growth of the health care industry?
- How much are insurance companies reimbursing massage therapists?
- In what ways is massage therapy being integrated into various health care environments?

In the section, you’ll...
- Obtain an update regarding employment in the health care industry and how this affects massage therapists.
- See how consumers are using massage for their health.
- Read about various insurance reimbursement opportunities for massage therapists.

As you examine these timely topics:
3A. Continued growth in the health care industry
3B. Consumer use of massage as part of an integrated approach to health care
3C. Massage and insurance
3D. Affordable care act (ACA) and massage
3A. Continued growth in the health care industry

- According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the healthcare industry added an average of 19,000 jobs per month in 2013. This is down from the average of 27,000 jobs per month that were added in 2012.
- The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that the health care and social assistance sectors of the economy will add the most jobs of any economic sector by 2022. These two sectors are expected to add a third of all jobs by 2022, growing at an annual rate of 2.6 percent and reflecting the needs of an aging population.
- Continued increases in both the overall size of the healthcare industry and in consumer spending on health care demonstrate increased demand for health care related products and services. These trends are expected to continue as the US population ages.

Massage therapists support the integration of massage in health care. As such integration continues to grow and more scientific research is being conducted on the efficacy of massage.

**Massage therapists continue to support integration of massage therapy into health care**

The number of massage therapists who think that massage therapy should be considered part of the health care field decreased slightly to 96 percent in 2013. This figure has otherwise remained constant at 97 percent since 2010. Therapists indicated the following as the most important ways to accomplish this integration (percentages are of respondents listing item as their top choice), and the order of the six ways did not change from 2012 to 2013:

- Massage prescribed/referred by health care provider (44 percent)
- Massage therapists working as part of a health care team alongside other complementary practitioners (26 percent)
- Massage therapists working as part of a health care team within a hospital or clinic (14 percent)
- Making massage available in hospitals and clinics (11 percent)
- Making massage available in integrated clinics (5 percent)
- Massage supervised by a health care provider (2 percent)

**Clinical studies on the efficacy of massage are ongoing**

AMTA continues to leverage its existing relationships within the healthcare industry to forge new partnerships with major organizations to conduct research studies on the efficacy of massage. The results of these studies will provide more evidence based research about massage therapy. Increasing the base of clinical knowledge and research about massage therapy will further enhance the integration of massage therapy into healthcare and will increase its use by patients. In recent years, there has been a shift
towards comparative effective research, a methodology designed to yield evidence on effectiveness, benefits and harms of different treatment options. This type of research compares massage therapy to other interventions.

The Massage Therapy Foundation promotes research literacy and capacity in the profession by granting funds for research and educational initiatives related to massage therapy, by providing direct consultation to the medical and research communities, and by educating massage therapists about the world of research.

There are many resources you can use to access current and past studies on the efficacy of massage:

www.amtamassage.org/research
www.massagetherapyfoundation.org
www.spaevidence.com
www.pubmed.gov
www.nccam.nih.gov
www.biomedcentral.com

Applying the Research:
1. How do you use research results to market your massage practice to consumers?
2. It is vital for massage therapists to be knowledgeable about the latest research on the efficacy of their work. Read the information in this report and visit www.massagetherapyfoundation.org for the latest information on clinical research on massage.
3. AMTA Position Statements www.amtamassage.org/positionintro.html shows the outcomes of clinical research on the value of massage for certain health conditions.
3B. Consumer use of massage as part of an integrated approach to health care

Male consumers increased their use of massage for medical reasons in 2013. Physical therapists increased their encouragement of patients to receive massage.

Consumer use of massage for medical and health reasons remained constant from 2012 to 2013

Forty-three percent of American massage consumers got a massage for medical and health reasons per the 2013 AMTA Consumer Survey. This has remained constant from 2012.

- Overall, 88 percent of Americans believe that massage can be effective in reducing pain and 88 percent believe that massage can be beneficial to health and wellness.

- Male consumers used massage for medical and health reasons (59 percent) significantly more than female consumers (34 percent) in 2013. Men increased their use of massage for medical and health reasons over 2012 (59 percent in 2013 versus 45 percent in 2012), while women decreased their use of massage for medical and health reasons (34 percent in 2012 versus 38 percent in 2012).

- Consumers aged 45-54 increased their use of massage for medical and health reasons in 2013. Consumers aged 35-44 decreased their use of massage for medical and health reasons in 2013. All other age brackets remained constant from 2012, or declined slightly.

- Consumers of all ages are using massage as a form of pain relief. In 2013, 19 percent of consumers used massage for pain relief. Male consumers (28 percent) were more likely than female consumers (15 percent) to use massage for pain relief. Consumers aged 45-54 were the most likely of all age brackets to use massage for pain relief, at 40 percent. Conversely, consumers aged 18-34 were least likely to use massage for pain relief, at just 8 percent.

- Sixteen percent of consumers discussed massage therapy with their doctor or healthcare provider in 2013. This has remained consistent from 2010 to 2013.

- Women are more likely than men to discuss massage therapy with their doctor, a fact that has not changed over the past three years. (See figure 28 for more information).
Figure 28. Consumers who discussed massage therapy with their health care providers

Despite the decline in physician referrals, overall consumer referrals to massage therapy increased from 2012 to 2013.

AMTA’s consumer research showed that, of consumers who discussed massage therapy with their doctor or healthcare provider, fewer received referrals from physicians (53 percent in 2013 versus 61 percent in 2012). Referrals from physical therapists increased to 41 percent in 2013, from 38 percent in 2012. Most other categories of health professionals decreased their recommendations of massage to consumers in 2013. Figure 29 shows the percentage of consumers who received recommendations for massage by the type of health care professional.

Figure 29. Health care professionals who recommended massage to consumers.
Massage therapists received more referrals from health care professionals

Massage therapists received more referrals from all categories of health care professionals in 2013 than in 2012.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Health care Professional</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hospitals and Medical Offices</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chiropractors and Integrated Health Clinics</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Health care Professionals</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Massage Therapists</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 30. Percentage of massage therapists who received referral at least once every 6 months by category of referring health care professional

Applying the Research:
1. The number of consumers who discuss massage therapy with their doctor or healthcare professional has remained constant over the past few years. How can you leverage relationships with healthcare professionals and consumers in your area to include massage therapy as part of a discussion about healthcare?
2. Referrals from all types of healthcare professionals are an important component of a successful massage practice. Host an open house or networking event for healthcare professionals in your area to build relationships.
3C. Massage and insurance

*Insurance reimbursement for massage therapy increased slightly in 2013*

Twenty-three percent of massage therapists were reimbursed by insurance for massage, a 3 percent increase over 2012. Insurance reimbursement includes multiple types of insurance, not only health insurance.

Of massage therapists receiving insurance reimbursement, 14 percent were reimbursed by medical insurance and 6 percent by auto insurance. Less than 1 percent received reimbursement through worker’s compensation.5

*Americans would like their health care plans to cover massage*
According to AMTA’s 2013 Consumer Survey, 58 percent of adult Americans would like to have their health insurance plan cover massage, down slightly from 61 percent in 2012. At 39 percent, the 65 and older age bracket was significantly less likely than all other age brackets to want their health insurance to cover massage.

Five percent of consumers surveyed indicated that the payment for their last massage was covered by insurance (health, auto, or worker’s compensation insurance), a 7 percent decrease from 2012.

*Massage therapists who use insurance reimbursement find it worthwhile for their business*

The 2013 AMTA Industry Survey provides information on insurance reimbursement for auto, medical, worker’s compensation and other insurance.

- Most massage therapists who received insurance reimbursement in 2013 found it to be worthwhile for their businesses.
- Depending on the type of insurance, the average amount of reimbursement received varied widely.

The average amount of reimbursement declined across all types of insurance from 2012 to 2013. Insurance reimbursement is determined by each state and not all states permit insurance reimbursement.
Average Reimbursement for One Hour of Massage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>Worthwhile for Business</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Auto Insurance</td>
<td>$73</td>
<td>$93</td>
<td>$78</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Insurance</td>
<td>$51</td>
<td>$75</td>
<td>$58</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worker's Compensation Insurance</td>
<td>$63</td>
<td>$84</td>
<td>$71</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Insurance</td>
<td>$50</td>
<td>$61</td>
<td>$58</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 31. Insurance reimbursement by type of insurance

Studies show that patients are paying out of pocket for massage in health care settings and insurance companies are covering a comparatively small portion of massage.

AMTA’s 2013 Industry Study shows that:

- Massage therapists working in a hospital, medical office or clinic were paid by patients 36 percent of the time, by insurance 11 percent of the time and by the facility 54 percent of the time. Payment by patients decreased from 2012 data and payment by the facility increased from 2012.
- Therapists employed in a chiropractic office or integrated health care clinic were paid by patients 38 percent of the time, by insurance 8 percent of the time and by the facility 53 percent of the time. Payment by patients stayed constant from 2012, while insurance payments decreased slightly.

Applying the Research:

1. While the amount of insurance reimbursement has decreased, more massage therapists say it is worthwhile for their practice to accept insurance reimbursement. What are the pros and cons of insurance reimbursement for your massage practice?
2. State insurance reimbursement policies change from year to year. Research your state’s rules regarding insurance reimbursement.
3D. Affordable Care Act (ACA) and massage

The Affordable Care Act continues to move towards implementation as state and federal agencies have begun operating insurance exchanges despite numerous operational and technical challenges. The 2014 year is expected to continue to present a variety of challenges as insurers, providers and regulators move through the new processes. Among issues to be played out are those of network adequacy for exchange plans. While benchmark plans have been identified, there continues to be uncertainty regarding issues such as provider nondiscrimination. The US Department of Labor, in cooperation with the US Department of Health and Human Services has issued several “Frequently Asked Questions” statements on the ACA, including on Provider Non-Discrimination. More specifically, the Departments stated:

The statutory language of PHS Act section 2706(a) is self-implementing and the Departments do not expect to issue regulations in the near future. PHS Act section 2706(a) is applicable to non-grandfathered group health plans and health insurance issuers offering group or individual health insurance coverage for plan years (in the individual market, policy years) beginning on or after January 1, 2014. Until any further guidance is issued, group health plans and health insurance issuers offering group or individual coverage are expected to implement the requirements of PHS Act section 2706(a) using a good faith, reasonable interpretation of the law. For this purpose, to the extent an item or service is a covered benefit under the plan or coverage, and consistent with reasonable medical management techniques specified under the plan with respect to the frequency, method, treatment or setting for an item or service, a plan or issuer shall not discriminate based on a provider’s license or certification, to the extent the provider is acting within the scope of the provider’s license or certification under applicable state law. This provision does not require plans or issuers to accept all types of providers into a network. This provision also does not govern provider reimbursement rates, which may be subject to quality, performance, or market standards and considerations.

The Departments will work together with employers, plans, issuers, states, providers, and other stakeholders to help them come into compliance with the provider nondiscrimination provision and will work with families and individuals to help them understand the law and benefit from it as intended.

Additionally, some state insurance regulatory authorities have made statements regarding Provider Non-Discrimination. These statements tend to be consistent in several aspects. Most notably, there tends to be agreement that:

- There are no mandates to contract with any certain providers or to include certain providers in provider networks;
- There is no mandate that all plans offer out-of-network benefits;
- There is no mandate specific to provider reimbursement rates.

The impact on the massage therapy profession will continue to be determined separately in each state. It is important to note that this is a snapshot of an environment that continues to be very fluid. AMTA understands some members find value in working
with health insurance companies while others prefer to not participate in third-party reimbursement. Through activities with a variety of health care organizations, AMTA continues to monitor and engage national and state agencies on behalf of its members and the profession. AMTA continues to stay committed to keeping its membership up-to-date on the latest developments.

If you have suggestions or identify additional information you need, please contact us at research@amtamassage.org.
Section 4 — Training and Education of Massage Therapists

Schools continue to be challenged by attracting students and marketing their programs.

This section takes an in-depth look at demographics, challenges and opportunities that affect massage therapy schools, teachers, graduates and students.

Key Questions:
- How can schools attract more students?
- What kinds of financial aid are schools offering to students?
- How can schools support new teachers?
- What benefits do schools provide to teachers?

Key Findings:
- The medium number of graduates reported per school in 2013 is 13-29.
- The average amount of initial in-class education that therapists have is 642 hours.
- Sixty-three percent of schools have difficulty attracting students.
- Schools are employing fewer full-time instructors, with 58 percent having any full time teachers.
- Seventy-five percent of schools offer financial aid to students.

We will cover these facets of massage education:
4A. Hours and types of training
4B. School trends and demographics
4C. School challenges
4D. School accreditation
4E. Teachers
4F. Graduates
4G. Students
4A. Hours and types of training

In 2013, the average massage therapist reported having received a few more hours of initial training than was reported in 2012.

Most massage therapists graduated from an individually owned, private, for profit massage therapy school

Sixty-seven percent of massage therapists reported in 2013 having graduated from an individually owned, private, for profit massage therapy school compared to 66 percent the prior year.\(^5\)

In 2013, fifteen percent of therapists reported graduating from a corporate school compared to 17 percent the previous year and 18 percent reported graduating from a public institution (community college, city college, state college/university) compared to 17 percent the prior year.\(^5\)

The total hours of massage therapists’ initial training increased in 2013

The average amount of initial training reported by massage therapists on the 2013 AMTA Industry Survey was 642 hours, an increase of 10 hours from 2012. The reported average of training hours has not changed significantly over the past several years; although in 2013, there was a significant increase in massage therapists with 500-600 hours of initial training, and a significant decrease in massage therapists with less than 500 hours of training. (See Figure 32 below.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hours of Initial Training</th>
<th>Percentage of Massage Therapists</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 500</td>
<td>2009 2010 2011 2012 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16% 13% 20% 20% 15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500-600</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>38 32 32 30 36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>601-700</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15 16 14 12 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>701-900</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15 23 21 24 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>901-1,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8 8 8 7 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 1,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 6 6 7 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Number of Hours</td>
<td>624 660 619 632 642</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 32. Hours of initial training.

See Figure 33 for initial training hours by work setting. Full-time employees and massage therapists working in health clubs and athletic facilities report the highest average initial training hours.
Average initial training hours

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sole Practitioner</strong></td>
<td>631</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Independent Contractor</strong></td>
<td>650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Full Time Employee</strong></td>
<td>719</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Part Time Employee</strong></td>
<td>662</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>My home</strong></td>
<td>606</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>My office</strong></td>
<td>651</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Client’s home</strong></td>
<td>620</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Client’s workplace</strong></td>
<td>624</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Massage therapy only franchise or chain</strong></td>
<td>664</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spa/salon</strong></td>
<td>656</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health club/athletic facility</strong></td>
<td>675</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hospital/medical clinic/office</strong></td>
<td>610</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chiropractic office/integrated health clinic with other CAM providers</strong></td>
<td>660</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hotel/resort/cruise</strong></td>
<td>611</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 33. Hours of initial training by therapists working in different work settings.*

**Schools are diverse in the type of massage therapy program they offer**

- Ninety-five percent of surveyed schools offer a basic certificate/diploma in massage therapy.
- Twenty-five percent offer an associate degree in massage therapy, same as last year. (For more information refer to Figure 34 below.)

**What type of massage therapy program(s) or education does your school/program currently offer?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Program</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic Certificate/Diploma in Massage Therapy</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuing Education in Massage Therapy</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Degree in Massage Therapy</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma/Certificate for a Specific Modality/Specialty</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Certificate/Diploma in Massage Therapy</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelors Degree in Massage Therapy</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 34. Type of massage therapy program(s) or education schools offer (Respondents could select multiple answers; numbers do not add to 100%)*
Courses geared to work settings
Niney-three percent of schools offer at least one course that is specific to a massage therapy work setting.
- Ninety percent of schools offered a class regarding offering massage therapy as a sole practitioner.
- Eighty-three percent of schools offered a course regarding providing massage therapy in medical locations. This figure was consistent from 2012 to 2013.
- Seventy-eight percent of schools offered a course regarding massage therapy provided in spas.

Business courses
Schools are increasing their business course offerings. In 2013, schools offered the following business courses:
- Marketing – 92 percent of schools offered marketing courses compared to 85 percent last year.
- Management - 67 percent offered management courses compared to 69 percent last year.
- Accounting - 38 percent offered accounting courses compared to 43 percent last year.
- Technology - 38 percent offered a course in technology, i.e. website development, PowerPoint presentation or social media compared to 32 percent of schools last year.

Distance learning
According to the 2013 AMTA School Survey, 17 percent of schools offer online courses for their entry level program versus 9 percent last year. Of schools that offer online courses for their entry level program:
- Sixty percent of schools with distance learning said they offered 1 to 2 distance learning classes as part of their entry level massage therapy program.
- No schools are solely using online learning in their entry level programs.
4B. School trends and demographics

*There is a wide variety of massage schools in the United States.*

The results of the *2013 AMTA School Survey* show variations across schools in massage therapy training. These include:

- Number of locations
- Graduates per year
- Program hours
- Cost
- Year established

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Type</th>
<th>Age of School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall Median</td>
<td>2001 or Newer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individually Owned</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part of Larger Corporation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Institution</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of locations</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduates per year</td>
<td>13-29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median in-class supervised hours required (entry-level program)</td>
<td>601-700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median clinical hours required (entry-level program)</td>
<td>81-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median cost-per-hour of entry level program before financial aid</td>
<td>$14-$16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of Operation</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001 or newer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000 or older</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 35. School profile information from 2013 AMTA School Survey**

**Highlights of Figure 35** This chart gives insights into some of the main differences in schools of massage therapy. Keep reading for more information.

**Number of Locations**

Most massage schools had a single location in 2013. Schools that are part of a larger corporation have between six and ten locations.

**Graduates per year**

All categories of school cited a median of 13-29 graduates per year.
Program hours
Schools required a median of 601-700 in-class, supervised hours, and an additional 81-100 clinical hours on top of that. Massage therapists cited an average of 642 hours of entry-level training.

- Schools that are part of a larger corporation required a median of 701-800 in-class, supervised hours. This category of school also required a median of 101 or more clinical hours.
- Schools established in 2000 or before required a median of 81-100 clinical hours.

Cost
The median cost in 2013 was between $14 and $16 per hour before factoring in financial aid. This has not changed since 2012.

- Schools that are part of a larger corporation and public institutions charged a median of $20 or more.
- Older and newer schools both charged a median of $14-$16 per hour.

Year Established
Fifty-eight percent of the schools participating in the 2013 AMTA School Survey were established in the year 2000 or before, compared to 55 percent last year. Of those schools:

- Sixty-nine percent are individually owned schools, up from 59 percent in 2012.
- Twenty-nine percent are massage schools within public institutions/community colleges, up from 27 percent in 2012.
- Three percent are part of a larger corporation, down from 14 percent in 2012.
4C. School challenges

*Difficulty attracting students and marketing their school/programs remain the biggest challenges for schools.*

**All Schools**
Across all three categories of massage schools, the top three challenges cited were: difficulty in attracting students, difficulty marketing the school or program, and difficulty keeping in touch with alumni. In 2013, individually owned schools cited more difficulty competing with other massage schools than keeping in touch with alumni; the top two challenges remained the same.

**Individually-owned massage schools**
The biggest challenges for these schools are *attracting students* and *keeping in touch with alumni*. Sixty-one percent of individually-owned schools said they had difficulty attracting students compared to 36 percent last year. Thirty-three percent said they had difficulty in keeping up with alumni, which passed marketing school/program as the second biggest challenge faced by this category of school in 2013. More individually-owned schools had difficulty attracting students in 2013 than in 2012. (See Figure 36.)

**Massage schools as part of larger corporations**
Their biggest challenge remains attracting students. All corporate schools said they have difficulty attracting students compared to 68 percent of schools last year. Their next biggest challenge was marketing their school/program. (See Figure 36.)

**Public institutions with separate massage programs**
Seventy-four percent of public schools said marketing their program was challenging in 2013, compared to 58 percent in 2012. They also had difficulty attracting students; this remained a constant 53 percent of schools from 2012 to 2013. (See Figure 36.)
What are the biggest challenges affecting your school?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOP CHALLENGES AFFECTING MASSAGE SCHOOLS</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty in attracting students</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty in marketing school/programs</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty in keeping in touch with alumni</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty in competing with other massage schools</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty in providing training to teachers</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty in finding qualified teachers</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty in teaching students with diverse needs</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty in offering financial aid</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High cost of products/services needed for school</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High student drop-out rates</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of current information about industry trends, facts, demographics</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty in retaining qualified teachers</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty in obtaining/retaining school accreditation</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty in finding employment for graduates</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rising insurance costs</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty in developing curriculum</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty in evaluating students and/or the entire school</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of guidelines/hiring practices for teachers</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Individually Owned
2. Part of Larger Corporation
3. Public Institution

Figure 36. Top challenges affecting massage schools
Interpreting Figure 36
Schools mentioned many other challenges beyond those listed on the above chart. Most open-ended responses encompass a wide variety of topics, but include competition from other schools, accreditation issues, and internal/budget factors.

How schools are marketing their programs
School websites are the most commonly reported medium used by schools to promote their institutions with 97 percent of schools saying they use their websites for marketing purposes. Eighty-three percent said they market their school through word of mouth and 70 percent used social media. (See Figure 37 below).

![Figure 37. How do you market your school?](chart)

Of those schools that answered “other,” the most prevalent responses were school and career fairs, recruiters, and billboard advertisements.
4D. School accreditation\textsuperscript{12}

According to the 2013 AMTA School Survey, 75 percent of schools report being accredited, consistent with 2012 data.

Between 2010 and 2013, the total number of massage schools accredited by nationally-recognized accrediting organizations increased 15 percent while the number of campuses in these accredited institutions increased 29 percent. (See Figure 38.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accrediting Organization</th>
<th>2010 Numbers</th>
<th>2011 Numbers</th>
<th>2012 Numbers</th>
<th>2013 Numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABHES</td>
<td>Institutions</td>
<td>Campuses (Including Main)</td>
<td>Institutions</td>
<td>Campuses (Including Main)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABHES</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACICS</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACCET</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACCSC</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMTA</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NACCAS</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>547</td>
<td>365</td>
<td>755</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textit{Figure 38. Accreditation numbers}
4E. Teachers

*Schools continued to employ fewer full-time instructors and more part-time instructors in 2013.*

*Most massage instructors are part-time employees.*
Massage schools employ fewer independent contractors than full-time and part-time instructors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1-5</th>
<th>Median of part-time instructors currently employed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>Median of independent contractors currently employed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>Median of full-time instructors currently employed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78%</td>
<td>Have part-time instructors (up from 76% in 2012).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58%</td>
<td>Have full-time instructors (down from 66% in 2012).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32%</td>
<td>Have independent contractors (down from 46% in 2012).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 39. Number of instructors in massage therapy schools*

**Instructor teaching experience**

*Experience of massage therapy instructors*

*Figure 40. Experience of massage therapy instructors related to massage therapy*
Median teaching experience unrelated to massage is 3-5 years. Schools may want to consider providing massage therapy teacher training for new instructors without experience in massage therapy instruction.

**What qualifications do massage schools look for in instructors?**

In their instructor hiring requirements, massage schools focus on massage therapy experience first. Figure 39 below provides more detail regarding hiring requirements for instructors.

### General Hiring Requirements by School Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Individually Owned</th>
<th>Part of Larger Corporation</th>
<th>Public Institution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experience as a practicing massage therapist</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current status as a practicing massage therapist</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience in specific modalities</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching experience</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Require massage instructor training</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelors degree</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate degree</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 41. General hiring requirements by school type**

**Hiring requirements remain steady in 2013**

Eighty-seven percent of schools require “experience as a practicing massage therapist” to qualify as an instructor, down slightly from 93 percent in 2012. Similarly, schools are looking for instructors who currently practice massage therapy, have experience with specific modalities, and have teaching experience.

**Hiring challenges**

Twenty-seven percent of schools said they had trouble hiring instructors for their program compared to 26 percent last year. Of those schools that had difficulty hiring instructors:

- Eighty-eight percent of schools said they found instructor candidates lacking in teaching experience, compared to 67 percent last year.
- Eighty-two percent said they found instructor candidates lacking in classroom management skills, a figure that has not changed from last year.
- Seventy-five percent of schools said prospective teachers were lacking in course planning and curriculum development skills compared to 61 percent of teacher candidates last year.
**Teacher Training**
All schools surveyed provided teacher training in 2013, up from 74 percent of schools in 2012. Of those schools that provided teacher training:
- Ninety-two percent provided in-service training compared to 94 percent last year.
- Sixty-three percent provided a peer/monitor relationship compared to 80 percent last year.
- Forty-seven percent provided reimbursement for continuing education compared to 48 percent last year.
- Forty-three percent provided other support and resources, including workshops designed for teaching massage therapy, and guest speakers.

**How much are instructors paid?**
According to the 2013 AMTA Massage School Survey, which surveyed instructor pay for 2012, median hourly pay for schools was $21-$25 per hour, with public institutions paying more than individually owned and corporate schools. Here is more information on the breakdown of massage therapy instructor pay in 2012:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2012 Median Hourly Instructor Pay by School Type</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Individually Owned</th>
<th>Part of Larger Corporation</th>
<th>Public Institution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$21-$25</td>
<td>$21-$25</td>
<td>$21-$25</td>
<td>$21-$25</td>
<td>$31-$35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 42. 2012 Median hourly instructor pay*

**What percentage of schools provides benefits to instructors?**
Forty-seven percent of schools provided benefits to their instructors in 2013 compared to 46 percent last year. Those schools that provided benefits to instructors increased their benefits:
- Eighty-eight percent provided medical insurance compared to 86 percent last year.
- Eighty-six percent provided retirement services compared to 76 percent last year.
- Seventy-nine percent provided dental insurance compared to 76 percent last year.
- Sixty-nine percent provided life insurance compared to 56 percent last year.
4F. Graduates
Some students may find it difficult to find a job in massage therapy or a job that will support them until they can build up a client base. Schools with a formal placement program continue to see a large percentage of students finding employment.

Number of graduates per school
According to the 2013 AMTA Massage School Survey, massage schools had a median of 13-29 students graduate from their program in a given year.

Schools continue to help new graduates find jobs
While getting ready to graduate, some students may find it difficult to obtain employment in massage therapy that will support them until they can build up a client base. This is one of the major reasons why new therapists leave the profession. In light of this, 91 percent of schools now offer some kind of job placement services to their students:

- Fifty-three percent of schools provided a job board or bank that students can use to look for jobs in 2013, a figure that stayed constant from 2012.
- Thirty-three percent of schools offered a formal placement program for graduates in 2013, compared to 38 percent in 2012.
- Half of schools with a formal placement program placed over 90 percent of recent graduates. Eighty-five percent of schools with a formal placement program placed 61 to more than 90 percent of recent graduates.

Some of the specific job placement services schools provided to students include assistance with resume writing, cover letter writing, and interviewing skills. Additionally, many schools with a formal job placement program established relationships with massage therapy businesses and held job fairs for students at their school.
4G. Students

*Student demographics and attrition rates remained steady in the last year.*

**Massage students are more evenly distributed in age**
See the chart below for the age distribution of massage students as cited by schools. Numbers do not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

**Massage therapy students are mostly female**
Seventy-eight percent of massage therapy students are female with male students making up 22 percent of the student body. This data is consistent with past years.

**Student attrition rates remain steady**
The median attrition rate among schools in 2013 was 10-20 percent, the same as it was in 2012.

- Forty-five percent of schools said their attrition rate was less than 10 percent in 2013, the same as in 2012.
- Sixteen percent of schools had an attrition rate over 30 percent.
- Fifty-two percent of individually owned massage schools had attrition rates of less than 10 percent in 2013. Forty-two percent of public institutions and twenty-five percent of corporate schools had attrition rates of less than ten percent in 2013.
**Schools are offering financial aid to students**
The 2013 AMTA School Survey indicated that financial aid offerings remained steady from 2012 at 75 percent of schools. An additional seven percent of schools said they intend to offer financial aid in the future but do not do so at this time. Of schools that offered financial aid:

- Ninety-eight percent offered federal programs, a seven percent increase over 2012.
- Seventy-three percent offered payment plans, a three percent increase over 2012.
- Sixty-nine percent offered loans, a three percent increase over 2012.
- Sixty percent offered scholarships.
- Other financial aid programs mentioned were work/study and organizational grants.
Appendix

List of Sources

1. All data in “Section 1 – Consumers of Massage Therapy” and “Section 3C – Consumer use of massage as part of an integrated approach to health care,” and where otherwise specified, are from the 2013 AMTA Consumer Survey and previous years’ AMTA Consumer Survey, unless otherwise noted.

2013 AMTA Consumer Survey. CARAVAN® Opinion Research Corporation International conducted the annual consumer survey during August 8-11, 2013, among a combined national probability sample of 1,007 adults (504 men and 503 women), aged 18 and older, living in private households in the continental United States. The survey has indicated margins of error at the 95 percent confidence interval of plus or minus three percent. Commissioned by AMTA, this is the seventeenth annual massage therapy survey of American consumers.

2. All data in Section 1A are from U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division and American Fact Finder.


5. All data in “Section 2 - The Massage Therapy Profession” and “Section 3 - Health Care and the Massage Profession,” and where otherwise specified, are from the 2013 AMTA Industry Survey and previous years’ AMTA Industry Survey, unless otherwise noted.

2013 AMTA Industry Survey. Association Metrics conducted an annual AMTA Industry Survey during August 2013. A total of 1,143 qualified surveys were received. The survey has indicated margins of error at the 95 percent confidence interval of plus or minus three percent. The objectives of the AMTA Industry Survey are to gain insight into the profession in order to provide AMTA members, consumers and other professionals with “state-of-the-industry” information by tracking and benchmarking, among other trends: information on massage therapists working in different work settings, their income, compensation, requirements, practices, training, education, demographics, and more. The 2013 AMTA Industry Survey is the ninth annual survey on the massage therapy profession.

7. All data in “Technology and the Massage Practice,” and where otherwise specified, are from the **2013 AMTA Technology Survey**, unless otherwise noted.

**2013 AMTA Technology Survey.** AMTA staff conducted an annual Technology Survey in October 2013. An electronic survey was emailed to 10,000 professional, graduate, and student massage therapists. A total of 463 responses were received. The survey has indicated margins of error at the 95 percent confidence interval of plus or minus four percent.

8. All data in Section 2E are from the **ISPA 2013 US Spa Industry Study**, unless otherwise noted.

The study was commissioned by the International Spa Association (ISPA). The survey was launched on a bespoke Internet registration site in February 2013 and ran until early May 2013. The number of responses to the full survey was 497. The survey has indicated margins of error at the 95 percent confidence interval of plus or minus 4.8 percent.


10. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services website, **Fact Sheet: Essential Health Benefits: HHS Informational Bulletin**.

11. All data in “Section 4 – Training and Education of Massage Therapists” are from the **2013 AMTA Massage School Survey**, unless otherwise noted.

**2013 AMTA Massage School Survey.** AMTA staff conducted an annual Massage School Survey in September 2013. An electronic survey was emailed to 864 massage school contacts. A total of 60 surveys were received. The survey has indicated margins of error at the 95 percent confidence interval of plus or minus 12 percent. This is the seventh annual survey conducted by AMTA on the trends and information pertaining to massage therapy schools in the United States.

12. **Accrediting Organizations:**

- ABHES: Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools
- ACICS: Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools
- ACCET: Accrediting Council for Continuing Education and Training
- ACCSC: Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges
- COMTA: Commission on Massage Therapy Accreditation
- NACCAS: National Accrediting Commission of Cosmetology Art
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The American Massage Therapy Association® is the largest non-profit massage association in the United States. AMTA works to establish massage therapy as integral to the maintenance of good health and complementary to other therapeutic processes; to advance the profession through ethics and standards, continuing education, professional publications, legislative efforts, public education, and fostering the development of its professional, graduate, student, and school members.

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