



Oregon Board of  
Massage Therapists



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***Don't Forget Your License Number***

The OBMT requires license numbers in advertising for several reasons. The simplest, and most straightforward, is that it shows the public that you are a regulated health professional, with government agency oversight for public protection. Additionally, massage therapy has the highest rate of unlicensed practice out of any of the health professions. When checking for compliance (regular Craigslist, other online advertising reviews and investigating other complaints of unlicensed practice), having license numbers present saves so much time that it literally saves the board thousands of dollars in investigatory costs.

There are several different ways that you can choose to list your license number with your name and still be in compliance with OBMT requirements (the # symbol is optional).

- First Last, Licensed Massage Therapist 12345
- First Last, LMT 12345
- First Last, Somatic Bodyworker #12345
- First Last, OBMT #12345
- First Last, #12345

Per OAR 334-010-0025 (9), "Active licensed massage therapists are required to include their license number in all advertisements, including but not limited to: written, electronic, televised, and audio." If you have a question as to whether you need to include your license number, call the board and ask. Essentially, if your name is listed in conjunction with terminology that describes the practice of massage in Oregon, the license number needs to be included (common places include business cards, signage, radio ads, online listings, phone book, car vinyl, and web sites).

In all cases, remember that your physical license must be posted in a conspicuous location, and must be posted at each location if you work at multiple locations. If you are at an event, you should take your "wallet copy" of your license and either have it in a nametag pin or on a lanyard (like at a convention) if there is not a surface to display it on. If you've lost your license and want additional copies, these can be provided for \$10 per copy when you contact the board office.

~Heather Bennouri



**2012 Upcoming Board Meeting Dates**

- Monday, Aug 6th
- Monday, Oct 15th
- Monday, Nov 26th

All meetings are held at the Board office and begin at 9:00 a.m. unless otherwise noticed.

## *Summer Recreation and Self Care*

Summer is here! How about a little “hydrotherapy”? Not the kind that LMT’s are using in the treatment sense, but rather using water as a therapy for our own selves. Now that the sun’s warmth is shining down from above, the temptation to hit the water for recreation has never been greater. Water has many amazing healing qualities and if you’re a water baby like me, I live to be immersed in it on a regular basis, or as often as my schedule will allow.

Here are a few helpful tips or things to consider when enjoying your favorite water sport:

Whether you are heading to the beach to hit the surf, swimming at your favorite pool, or riding rapids rafting down our many rivers, you will need to grab your SPF sunscreen protection, LOTS of clean water to drink and some nutritious food to eat! The fact that you are in water constantly may make you think that you’re plenty hydrated, not that hungry, or sunscreen isn’t that important. Waterproof or a sport type of sunscreen works the best and yes, reapplication again and again is necessary. Just like drinking water regularly to stay as hydrated as possible will help you from feeling lethargic. And yes, it’s best to wait a little while after eating before you return to vigorous swimming or water sport activities.

Also, it seems to be popular to enjoy an occasional beer or three while enjoying the summer sun, fun, and water sport activities, but please refrain until you are on dry ground. The last thing you want is to have your senses altered in any open water situation especially while maneuvering boats, boards, paddles, etc. If you don’t know how to swim, take some lessons from a professional and enjoy swimming pools to start. If you’re an experienced swimmer make sure that you have the proper gear to deal with our NW conditions, such as full body wet suits, booties, and personal flotation devices (PFD, a.k.a. life vest). If the word “life” is in the title, it’s there for

a reason. I can tell you from personal experience mine has saved my “life” on at least 3 occasions this year and that’s after not using one last year and having a real near death experience... I do not recommend learning the hard way; just wear one on the river or any OPEN WATER situation that you are not familiar with. River rapids are very misleading. From a distance they appear harmless enough, it’s only when you are 10-15 feet away that you realize, uh-oh, and then they can take you, your vessel and everything else down the river at a very fast pace, tumbling over rock after rock and without a PFD, this could result in lots of scrapes, bruises, contusions, a search and rescue or rescue and recovery mission. So it’s always better to be safe than sorry and take those extra precautions.

I don’t want to cause alarm or fear in anyone, just watch the 11:00pm news and they will report all the river mishaps that have occurred. If you are unsure if you have the proper gear to participate safely in any of the above, contact the local parks and recreation for that area and ask. Remember knowledge is power, nature is a force to be reckoned with and water is one of the most powerful elements out there. Respect the situation, use good judgment and have fun. It can be done and always try to take a water sport buddy to go with and/or make sure your loved ones know where you’re going and the route you’re taking if possible. It’s just another precaution that could make a big difference in your day.

Now get out there and have a happy, healthy, and safe summer! Mahalo!

~Melanie Morin



## *New Board Member - Dr. Carolle Chapman*

I grew up in the heart of Kingston, Jamaica. My grandparent's home was where everyone came to get herbal medicines, fruits, vegetables and advice about their illnesses. My grandmother was a very industrious woman. She prepared and sold herbal remedies, fresh produce, pigeons, ducks and coal for cooking. From an early age I was surrounded by all kinds of herbs. I remember there was a big glass cabinet in the front room which was always full of bottles filled with herbs soaking in rum or brandy, tonics, salves, and liniments. I was too young to fully appreciate my good fortune to grow up in such a rich environment surrounded by tropical plant life, plant medicine and folklore. But I inherited a clear sense and knowing, early on that the body has a wonderful innate capacity to heal itself, given the right lifestyle and support.

Botanical medicine or plant medicine is widely practiced in all cultures and is one of the four pillars of naturopathic medicine. So although my grandmother passed before I was old enough to learn all about plant life and folklore from her, I was so absorbed in this lifestyle from an early age, that my appreciation of the healing power of nature was solidly instilled in me.

I went on to live with my mother after my grandfather passed on. Immigrating to the United States in the seventies led me down the scientific path. I had only a few months to graduate with a bachelor of science degree in biology and biochemistry from the University of the District of Columbia, in 1979, when my mother suddenly passed away.

On returning to Jamaica for her burial, I read of an offer of scholarships from the Cuban government to the Jamaican government for Jamaican nationals. I was in the right place at the right time. I became the grateful recipient of a scholarship to study conventional medicine in Cuba.

The next ten years was life-transforming. I learned medicine in a people-oriented environment. Pre-

vention and healthy lifestyle is the emphasis of the Cuban approach to healthcare, not profit. It was an auspicious beginning in my formation as a medical doctor.

After six years of study at the Superior Institute of Medical Sciences, Santiago de Cuba, I graduated with a degree in Family Medicine. I specialized in General Surgery for the next four years. In 1991 after graduating from the Superior Institute of Medical Sciences and the Calixto Garcia Hospital in Havana, I returned to Jamaica. For two years, I did public service, working in the departments of surgery and trauma, emergency medicine and obstetrics and gynecology in two of the island's public hospitals.

In 1994 I returned to the US. I participated in a program for foreign-trained doctors at St. Clare's Hospital in New York City for six months. The experience clarified for me the path I had now to follow. The practice of conventional medicine was not the way I should go. There had to be a better way to healthcare. The emphasis was on disease care and I had learned the contrary.

So, for the next nine years, while working as an adjunct professor with the City University of New York teaching medical sciences to people going into allied health careers, I started on my own quest to learn natural medicine. I went back to my roots. I studied many modalities in alternative medicine: Massage therapy, Iridology, Lymphology, Metaphysics, Aromatherapy, Crystals, Medical Intuition and so on. It was while I was searching for an umbrella under which to practice these various arts that I came to learn of naturopathic medicine. Encouraged by one of my mentors, Gary Null, I applied and was accepted to both the National College of Natural Medicine and Bastyr University of Naturopathic Medicine.

I attended Bastyr University from 2002 – 2006. For a year and a half I remained in the Seattle area

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## *New Board Member Continued*

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working in many settings such as hospitals, schools, shelters as a medical interpreter for Spanish-speaking populations. This period confirmed my intuition about the crying need for proper healthcare across the board: from children to the elderly. I searched for an opportunity to strengthen my naturopathic educational foundation and skills. My prayers were answered when I received the opportunity to join the Brooklyn Natural Healthcare Clinic as a resident naturopath, in October 2008.

Now, in the third year of practice, I offer services in naturopathic preventative medicine with a focus on mental and emotional health, weight management, nutrition and diabetes. Recently, I added the care of professional women and the empower-

ment of the female voice and female energy. My practice is based in the use of energy medicine. Biotherapeutic Drainage, Homeopathy, Flower Essences, The Emotion Code, Ayurveda, Reflexology, Massage Therapy and Spiritual Coaching are some of the modalities I use in the healing arts.

Health Education is one of my favorite things to do. So I regularly give talks and workshops on healthy living in Portland and beyond. Last August I launched Life Ways Health and Wellness Show on Portland Community Media TV. Each show focuses on a different health topic. Most recently, I joined the Oregon Board of Massage Therapists as a board member. This is a public service in accordance with the desire to serve the community and to promote massage therapy as a healing art.

~Dr. Carolle Chapman

## *Massage and Minors*

Question: Can LMTs provide massage to minors?

In the state of Oregon, yes. There are two restrictions\* to this, which are covered near the end of this article. Otherwise, any treatment that is within the scope of practice for LMTs, which the LMT is trained in, and which is appropriate and indicated for the minor client can be provided. As always, the LMT should also check with their liability insurance provider for any specialized restrictions or requirements in regards to massage/bodywork treatment for minors. LMTs should still consider the following issues when choosing to provide touch therapies to minors.

### **1) Appropriate training in techniques**

While this applies to every massage/bodywork treatment in all populations, there are considerations you want to think about prior to agreeing to give a massage to a minor. What stage of development is the minor at? Infants have different needs and different techniques should be used in comparison to a toddler, a young child, a pre-

teen, and teenager. Do you have adequate training to determine and provide appropriate treatment for the individual's needs and stage of development? Do you have equipment that is appropriately fitted for the child and/or can you make adjustments to your equipment? Do you need a step stool to make it safe for the minor to get on to your table or will you or the parent need to help the child up? Can you ensure for draping/coverage of the minor while providing help on to the table if needed? Are there things in your office that you may need to rearrange/remove to keep that age/development level of child safe (think low-level decorations or fountains that a toddler would consider a "toy" to play with while you discuss things with Mom). Are there any other age-specific needs you need to consider?

### **2) Written informed consent from the parent/guardian**

This is, sadly, often more for the protection of the LMT than for the minor. Get the consent. In Oregon, the age of consent for medical treatment is

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## *Massage and Minors Continued*

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14; however, it is still wise that you get parental consent up to age 18. Take into consideration the restrictions on specialized techniques for LMTs\* and any special terms in your liability insurance policy as well. Don't put your practice at risk just because you're good friends with the parent. Informed consent is a matter of professionalism and helps to establish trust and boundaries.

### **3) Parental physical presence**

For the protection of both the minor and the therapist, it can be a good idea to have a parent present in the room. This also helps establish a level of professionalism and boundaries. The parent can help answer questions you may have that the child may not be able to (or want to) answer. The child should still be given the option to disrobe (if needed) in privacy—without the parent—but the parent should be in the room when the LMT is present.

### **4) Communication**

While the first three considerations are obviously about basic protection for the client and LMT, communication with the minor and their parent/guardian becomes the most critical piece because it is where the most *misperceptions* can occur. Even if you have every other step covered, a miscommunication, even with completely ethical and appropriate intentions (and actions), can make a very carefully established professional environment deteriorate into a perceived—and highly problematic—ethical or boundary violation.

When you first set the appointment (either by phone or in person), have a conversation with the parent about your requirements for the treatment session. Establishing expectations: determine the nature of the treatment you will be doing, suggesting the minor wear a swimsuit or athletic apparel for the treatment (as needed), letting the parent know you need consent and their presence during the treatment, keeping the lighting brighter to provide for a more clinical atmosphere, or having a young child bring a blanket or stuffed animal

for comfort/familiarity can help with establishing a professional and comfortable environment.

Once the client arrives for the appointment, have a clear conversation with the minor and/or parent about what they expect from you in terms of specific goals for the treatment: recovery from a car accident, dealing with a sports issue, treating a specific pathology, general relaxation, or other issue. You should be able to, in return, communicate about expected outcomes in regards to the treatment goals expressed.

Prior to entering the treatment room (or, depending on your office space, prior to leaving to have the client get on the table or disrobe/change or begin treatment), there should be a very clear discussion about the treatment: *what level* (if any) of undress is expected, *how* the modesty/privacy of the minor will be protected (draping, coverage with athletic apparel, for example), *how* you will be using touch, *what level* of pressure/direction, *what* the techniques should/might feel like, *where* you will be applying touch techniques, *when and how* they should provide feedback, *what* to do if the treatment is uncomfortable or painful, and *why* you will be using the techniques you plan to use (feel free to lengthen this list as applicable). If you need to adjust your treatment plan during the treatment, this conversation should be repeated before you adjust the treatment itself. They (client and parent) should be encouraged and made to feel comfortable asking questions during any part of the process.

Include that you will be observing their physical (including facial expression) responses to the treatment and will ask questions so that you can better understand how they are responding to the treatment and you can adjust as needed. Depending on the age group/temperament/conditions of the child, this may be your only means of gauging their responses—and be aware that many parents will pick up on these responses prior to you.

Once the treatment begins, you should continue to communicate what you are doing, parallel to the

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## *Massage and Minors Continued*

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treatment plan outlined prior to the treatment. It is better to communicate and educate than to assume that everything is accepted and okay—the same parent that is a fabulous client and trusts you implicitly when they are on the table can end up being your worst nightmare if there is an actual or even *perceived* wrongdoing to their child.

### **5) Maintain boundaries**

Keep your focus on the treatment and the environment at all times, and avoid distractions like unrelated conversation. This doesn't mean that you have to be a jerk because Mom wants to chat during the treatment. More likely, Mom will be impressed that you are focusing on the needs of her child. Paying attention to the nonverbal cues of your client is important and having an unrelated conversation can distract you; focus on the *right* communication to ensure that your boundaries are in place.

### **6) Refer**

As with the presentation of any situation beyond your scope of practice or training, refer to another professional if you believe that your client's needs exceed your scope or abilities. You don't have to have a specific list of professionals on hand, but

recognizing that a child needs complementary care—or even an LMT whose personality matches the child's temperament better serves the needs of the child and the parent better.

### **\*7) Know the scope restrictions**

There are only two restrictions on LMTs providing massage to minors and both of these are in specialized techniques. Breast massage *requires* consent prior to and actual presence of a parent or legal guardian during treatment of a minor. Intravaginal and intra-anal massage cannot, under any circumstances, be performed on a minor by an LMT. If minors need this type of therapeutic treatment, it is recommended they see a health professional such as a physical therapist specializing in these techniques, an OB-GYN, or other appropriate health care provider.

Many of the guidelines here are applicable to all ages, minor or otherwise. It's always appropriate to have clear treatment-related communication with your clients; however, when you are simultaneously dealing with two individuals—and they are in significantly different age and development brackets (in this case, parent and child), it is essential that all parties understand and respect the professional boundaries you establish and maintain. Leave no room for misperceptions.

~Heather Bennouri

## *Increasing Reports of Internet/Email Scams*

The Board is receiving an increased number of reports pertaining to suspected internet/email scams targeting massage therapists. As such, the following information has been compiled to assist you in determining if you may be the target of a scam and where to report your suspicions.

### **The Scenario**

The most common scenario reported to the Board involves an individual or company representative from overseas contacting a massage therapist with initial communication being made primarily by email.

The communication indicates that they are coming to the area and wish to set up a session or a number of sessions with the LMT during their visit. They will then offer to mail you a check (money order, cashier's check, etc.) for payment. The check is for more than the amount that they owe you, and they instruct you to wire the balance back to them. In some instances they tell you to deposit the check and keep part of overpayment as a reward for your services. In the end, the check is discovered to be invalid, which with international payment may take weeks to determine,

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## *Increasing Reports of Internet/Email Scams*

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and you are then responsible for the full amount plus the funds that you wired to the scammer.

### **Tips to Avoid Falling Victim**

Be cautious when dealing with individuals outside of your own country.

Know who you're dealing with – try to independently confirm your prospective client's name, street address, and telephone number.

Beware when asked to assist in placing large sums of money in overseas bank accounts. There is no known legitimate reason for someone who is giving you money to ask you to wire money back.

Do not believe the promise of large sums of money for your cooperation.

Be willing to say "no" to a check for more than

your service price, no matter how tempting the plea or convincing the story.

If you do accept payment for services, inspect the cashier's check:

- Official checks are generally perforated on at least one side.
- Ensure the amount of the check matches in figures and words.
- Check to see that the account number is not shiny in appearance.
- Be watchful that the drawer's signature is not traced.
- Inspect the check for additions, deletions, or other alterations.
- Contact the financial institution on which the check was drawn to ensure legitimacy.
- Obtain the bank's telephone number from a reliable source, not from the check itself.

More advice on how to be on guard against Internet fraud is available at [OnGuardOnline.gov](http://OnGuardOnline.gov).

### **Where to Report**

Consumers are asked to report check overpayment scams to their state Attorney General (information at the end of this story), the National Fraud Information Center/Internet Fraud Watch (a service of the National Consumers League) at 1-800-876-7060 or [www.fraud.org](http://www.fraud.org), the Federal Trade Commission at 1-877-FTC-HELP or [www.ftc.gov](http://www.ftc.gov), or to the Internet Crime Complaint Center at <http://www.ic3.gov>

The Oregon Attorney General's Consumer Hotline is available between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. from Salem at 503-378-4320, from Portland at 503-229-5576, and from outside the Portland metro and Salem areas at 1-877-877-9392. You can also email at [consumer.hotline@doj.state.or.us](mailto:consumer.hotline@doj.state.or.us)

This information was compiled from the following web sites:

<http://usgovinfo.about.com/od/consumerawareness/a/overpay.htm>

<http://www.scambusters.org/overpayment.html>

<http://www.ic3.gov/>



## *Liability Insurance*

When calculating the cost of being a massage therapist, it can be frustrating, especially if you work part-time. The cost of maintaining the basic credentials to practice legally can be daunting (continuing education, licensure fees, business registry and license fees, etc.) so adding the expense of liability insurance—unless required by an employer—is something many therapists choose to skip. After all, it's not required, right? And all the other bills are adding up, so it's something that can be easy to let drop.

However, in today's litigious society, it is critical that you think about liability insurance from a different perspective. Here's an example to compare it to. Your car is low on gas, you're on the highway in a rural area, and you see a sign for a gas station that says "Next gas 78 miles." The price at this gas station is higher than you want to pay because you're on a limited budget. Do you skip the gas and hope that you can make it to the next station and simultaneously hope that it will be cheaper? Or do you suck it up and either fill up or *at least* get the minimum to make it to the next stop?

Chances are you stop to get some gas. The reasoning is simple and obvious: it will cost you more money and time if you run out of gas, have to call a tow truck, and then wait for rescue.

Liability insurance can be a lot like that last gas stop. You don't want to pay that much and you might wish you didn't need it, *but you need to make a reasonable and responsible decision* for your situation.

It is helpful to understand that even if you are a phenomenal bodyworker or massage therapist, it is still possible to be sued. It does not take much (sadly, sometimes it apparently takes nothing at all) for someone to file a legal claim against you. Liability insurance protects you, your practice, your assets (home, vehicles, other possessions), and your employer or landlord (or both). Liability insurance protects you against more than just malpractice (whether the claim may be justified or not). It can protect your client and cover their medical

treatment even if—perhaps through no fault of your own—a client is inadvertently injured due to your treatment. A good policy also covers what is often referred to as "slip and fall" insurance—for the person who, through their own fault, slips on a leaf or trips on a stair—and then places the blame on you for having the leaf or the stair there.

Some may think that they own little of value that could be "taken" if a successful lawsuit were filed against them so why bother? Perhaps they rent their home and don't own a car or anything of significant value. There might not be any funds in the bank. However, money can be garnished from future wages (at a job you haven't even applied for yet) and from tax refunds, making for a long and unstable future—even if it's because the less-than-considerate neighbor was the one who used his leaf blower to the detriment of your front stoop.

Liability insurance, like that gas stop, is something that most people can't afford *not* to get. The protection (and peace of mind) are just as critical as any other aspect of maintaining professionalism with your practice: it's simply not worth the risk.

In addition to the benefit of financial protection of liability insurance, most insurance policies come

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"Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around."

~Leo Buscaglia

"The master therapist is real, calm, nonjudgmental, intelligent, sensitive, strong yet flexible, supportive, compassionate, empathic and joyful."

~John Barnes

## *Liability Insurance Continued*

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with an array of additional benefits. Some companies have nationwide organizations that promote and protect the field of massage therapy, including supporting research in touch therapies. Some provide marketing resources, educational resources, business-building help, networking, magazine subscription(s) and professional association membership with their policies. Some have different levels of insurance and different types of coverage.

When you purchase (or renew) your policy, it is important you look at the structure of the policy. If you don't understand terminology in the policy descriptions, *call the company and ask before you purchase*. Think about all the types of work you do and make sure that the policy you purchase covers techniques you use. Some policies do not cover

Hot Stone. Some cover cupping techniques, but not fire cupping. Find out what modalities/ techniques the policy (or policies) you are considering cover—and to what extent.

Finally, after you have purchased your policy, *read it*. Yes, it's legalese and can be dreadfully boring. However, it's better to know up front that you will be covered because you keep the required records than to discover you've invalidated your coverage because you didn't write down a few details in your client charts.

The extra cost (and details) of liability insurance can be frustrating, but it sure beats the alternatives. Take a good look at your practice—from all perspectives—and make sure you don't get caught "out of gas."

~Heather Bennouri

### *Ask The Board*

**Q: "Do you give CEU's for attending Board or committee meetings, and if so, how many hours are issued?"**

**A: When you attend a board meeting or a committee meeting from the board you will receive one Continuing Education Contact Hour Credit. This is a cost effective way of staying informed regarding licensure issues and to receive continuing education credits. The board and committee meetings are posted on the board's web-site.**

**If you would like to submit your question to be addressed in a future issue of the Boarderline, please email your question to [kathryn.watson@state.or.us](mailto:kathryn.watson@state.or.us)**



#### **Oregon Board of Massage Therapists**

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**Mission:** The Oregon Board of Massage Therapists regulates and monitors the practice of massage therapy in Oregon. Its role is to balance public safety and the needs of Licensed Massage Therapists by developing, implementing, and maintaining the standards of professional conduct and practice.