

# STUDENT CASE REPORT CONTEST

## INTRODUCTION

The Massage Therapy Foundation is delighted to invite you to participate in our Student Case Report Contest. This contest fosters an opportunity for students to develop research skills by conducting their own research case report in which they will summarize their results in the format of a professional research paper. Top-rated reports will receive recognition in the way of publication opportunities and cash rewards. This educational event also provides research acclaim for the host schools. Please see the Foundation's Mission and Goals at [www.massagetherapyfoundation.org](http://www.massagetherapyfoundation.org).

## CASE REPORT GUIDELINES

### CASE REPORT STRUCTURE

Students must report on independent clinical interventions on one client with guidance from a Case Report Supervisor and/or a Clinic Supervisor. This includes doing a literature review on the presenting condition or client goal; creating and implementing a treatment plan in accordance with the literature, the needs of the client, and the students' expertise; writing up the results; discussing the implications of the outcomes; and offering suggestions for future study. **Because a case report is on one client only we will not accept a case series on multiple clients. Submissions of this type will not be scored by the reviewers.**

### SCHOOL AND SUPERVISOR ROLES

Participating massage therapy programs and their student supervisors play a crucial role in the success of this contest. In order for the student to successfully participate, the school must commit to:

- Provide a supervised clinical component as part of the school's program, in compliance with local jurisdictional requirements.
- Provide a case report supervisor for each student entering the competition; this person may or may not be the student's clinical supervisor.
- Promote the competition within the school.
- Create an in-house process for selecting the best three case reports produced by the school's students. Each school can submit a maximum of three case reports to the Foundation's case report contest review committee. The student authors of the reports must give the school permission to submit their work to the Foundation contest.

Faculty members assisting students participating in the scholarly contest may be involved in one of two roles, or may fulfill both simultaneously:

**1. Clinical Supervisor (CS):** This role involves collaborative management of the case with the student in accordance with generally accepted standards of practice. This function, being a standard component of the student's clinical education, is related yet distinct from the case report contest. If the CS is not performing the role of case report supervisor, he or she must verify to the CRS that the student's report is an accurate reflection of the student's clinical experience with the client.

**2. Case Report Supervisor (CRS):** This role involves acting as a guide and resource as the student researches and writes the case report. Note that the report must be the student's work, and that in providing support and direction the CRS should not unduly influence the work. The CRS must sign off on the final report, attesting to its being the work of the student and an accurate representation of the student's activities in meeting the contest's requirements.

#### Logistics of the case report

- Students must conduct a minimum of five (5) massage therapy sessions with the participating client.
- It is highly recommended that massage therapy be the only new intervention in the client's treatment plan.
- Patient confidentiality and the security of health information must be maintained. Do not include any information that may lead to the personal identification of the client.

#### Document Preparation and Submission

- The case report document must be double-spaced, using 12 pt. font size, in Times (or similar) font with 1 inch margins on all sides, written in the English language, and saved as a PDF document. Tables and figures, if included, should be inline with text and not placed at the end of the document.
  - The report must be concisely and coherently written and follow the prescribed format. (**value: 10 points**)
  - The document must be 2000-4000 words, excluding the cover page and references.
  - The case report should include a condition and/or intervention that is interesting and pertinent to the massage therapy profession.
  - Reports must be submitted online through [www.massagetherapyfoundation.org](http://www.massagetherapyfoundation.org) by June 1, 2018

### **THE CASE REPORT**

A well-written case report describes the client's condition, a well thought out and documented treatment plan and assessment, and results. A beautifully conducted case intervention will lose much of its value if it is not presented in a succinct and coherent manner. Therefore, scientific papers are written in a style that is intended to be clear and concise. Their purpose is to inform an audience about an important issue and to document the particular approach they used to investigate that issue.

Case reports are written in the same manner as research reports. However, case reports are not research. They are a report of the assessment, intervention, and results of a single client. The student therapist will have developed a treatment protocol and ways to measure the treatment outcomes for the individual client with the intent being to improve the health status of the client. Research studies, on the other hand, are developed with the intent of assessing the therapy and frequently focus on the proper and consistent administration of the therapy rather than modification of the therapy to improve the effects on the client. Research with human subjects requires approval from and oversight by an Institutional Review Board (IRB) to help protect the rights and welfare of the human participants. **If the submitted manuscript is determined to be a research study and not a case report it will not be considered for this contest.** If you have

questions or concerns about the possibility of your case report being considered research, please contact the Foundation for clarification.

The following links are good sample case reports. These reports received prizes in Student Case Report Contest in previous years.

<http://www.ijtmb.org/index.php/ijtmb/article/view/161/223>

<http://www.ijtmb.org/index.php/ijtmb/article/view/83/140>

The format is based upon new recommendations for consistency and quality in case reporting. Please see the Munk and Boulanger article “Adaptation of the CARE Guidelines for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork Publications: Efforts to Improve the Impact of Case Reports”

(<http://www.ijtmb.org/index.php/ijtmb/article/view/251/303>)

### **1. Cover Page**

Include the title, word counts for abstract, word counts for body of the report, author’s name, contact information, mailing address, email address, and signature.

### **2. Acknowledgements**

Please recognize any non-authors who made substantial contribution to the work including any mentors or contributors and a brief description of how they contributed. Do not include the client’s name.

### **3. Abstract/Key Words (value: 10 points)**

An **abstract** is a condensed version of the paper (300 word limit) and should be structured to include the following sections:

- Background/Introduction and objectives for the case report.
- Case presentation: should include description of the client, health history and diagnosis, the therapist’s assessments, treatment(s), therapist description and outcomes.
- Discussion.

Frequently, readers of a scientific journal will only read the abstract, choosing to read the full text of only those papers that are most relevant to them. For this reason, and because abstracts are frequently made available by various internet abstracting services, this section is an important summary of the case.

**Key Words** - Citation indexes use key words (or phrases) to help people search for relevant articles. Authors should list 3-5 Keywords with reliance on the Medical Subject Headings (MeSH) of the National Library of Medicine. For more information go to [www.nlm.nih.gov/mesh/](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/mesh/).

### **4. Introduction (value: 10 points)**

In this section, the author should build a case for selecting the client or intervention to observe. There should be enough background information on the condition being studied for a reader to understand the topic. Findings of previously published studies must be presented to help explain why the current case is of scientific interest. This is called a literature review. No results or data from the case should be in this section. The last sentence(s) of the Introduction should state the objective and/or hypothesis: the research

question. This should make a smooth transition from the Introduction section to the Methods section.

Appropriate use of citations from the literature review will be emphasized in the scoring process. References must include at least some of the following: academic books, peer-reviewed journals such as *International Journal of Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork* or *Journal of Bodywork & Movement Therapies*. Students are expected to utilize reputable biomedical and massage therapy databases as part of their literature search strategy. Use of non-peer reviewed sources such as *Massage Therapy Journal (MTJ)*, *Massage Today*, and seminar or course notes, etc. should be kept to a minimum.

#### **5. Case Presentation (Total 60 points)**

These sections provide all the methodological details necessary for another practitioner to duplicate the work. It includes the client profile and the treatment plan. It is safe to assume that readers have the same basic skills as the author, but don't know the specific details of the therapeutic process. This section should be a narrative of the steps in the assessment and treatment, but not a list of instructions one might find in a cookbook. An important part of writing a scientific paper is deciding which information should be condensed, and what needs to be described in detail.

**Patient/Client information: (value: 10 points)** This portion should contain a detailed account of the patient/client. This may include a presentation of the client's medical history and diagnosis (including what kind of professional arrived at the diagnosis), prior treatments, findings from a massage assessment, findings from other health care providers, and any contraindications to the use of massage. The client should have a condition that is modifiable or palliated by massage. The student should include a description of the client's desired outcomes.

**Diagnostic assessment: (value: 10 points)** This section will include any information from a healthcare practitioner who can perform diagnosis, e.g., information from the client/patient's chiropractor or doctor about the health condition. A client's self-assessment is not appropriate. The massage practitioner should verify the health condition with the diagnosing provider.

**Clinical Findings: (value: 10 points)** The massage practitioner will also perform an assessment of the client/patient and should include any relevant findings, e.g., postural analysis, visual observations, or range of motion.

**Assessment Measures: (value: 10 points)** Assessments need to be very clearly addressed. How, when, and where the assessments were taken should be clearly stated, as well as what measurement was chosen, why it was chosen, and what was specifically measured. The validity and reliability of scales should be discussed if applicable including if the measurement has been used and validated in other massage studies.

**Therapeutic Intervention: (value: 10 points)** A description of the practitioner as well as the environment in which the massage was performed should begin this section. The treatment plan portion should describe the massage/bodywork procedures and how subject progress was monitored. The author should provide specific details regarding the massage/bodywork techniques used, including duration of treatment, type of stroke, body regions worked, number of treatments, etc.

A crucial component of the treatment plan is the author's rationale for the particular massage/bodywork technique(s) used. Treatment choices must be supported with reference to the available literature, massage texts/instructional handbooks, and safe practice guidelines. If there are no direct references to massage therapy for the condition, the student should indicate why the treatment approach was chosen based on an understanding of how the condition typically presents and how it presents in the client. References from other disciplines (e.g., physical therapy, occupational therapy, etc.) may also be helpful.

Report if any health promotion/health education messages and/or client "homework" are given.

Avoid using trademarked names of modalities and traditional French names for strokes; instead, simply provide a description of the work: "longitudinal stroking" is more appropriate than "effleurage", for example.

Include a summary of any methodological changes that occur during the course in the Treatment Plan, along with rationalization for such change.

**Informed consent: (value: 10 points)** If informed consent documents are not complete and included in the appendix, the case report will not be scored. Clearly include information about the clients informed consent at the end of the section to meet ethical standards. This section should be clearly described and should relate to "patient/client centered" care. The discussion should include how education was provided to the client to help them be a partner in the decision making process.

**Timeline: (no points)** The timeline is suggested but not required. This timeline, which may simply be presented in a table or figure, should demonstrate the length of the health condition and where the massage intervention took place within that health condition.

## 6. Results (value 20 points)

This section presents the results of the intervention but should not attempt to interpret their meaning. Data should be presented in an organized and easily understandable manner; typically raw data should not be presented. Authors are encouraged to succinctly present findings in either a table or graph format. However, data should be presented only once. If a table or figure is presented, it should be titled as such and have a caption (and legend, if necessary) so the reader can quickly understand what is being presented. The written portion of the report must refer to any table or figure, if presented. Make sure to

also include how the client/patient tolerated and followed the treatment plan and how this was monitored. Additionally, if any client “homework” is given, results of client compliance should be reported.

**Patient/client perspective:** Including the patient/client’s voice and thoughts on treatment(s) and outcome(s) can strengthen the report. Comments and quotes from the patient/client in the discussion section allow them to be heard about their experience.

## 7. Discussion (value: 20 points)

The Discussion section provides an opportunity to summarize and evaluate the outcomes of the treatment process. It is also important to integrate the findings from the case into the body of literature that currently exists on the topic. Therefore, this section should:

- Summarize the outcomes and effectiveness of treatment.
- Relate the findings back to the objective.
- Place the results in context of published findings (using sources previously cited as well as other sources).
- Explain why the obtained results may differ from what others have found.
- Speculate on why the treatment had an effect or not.
- Implications for practice, education and research.

The author should also note problems with the methods, explain any anomalies in the data and suggest future research directions that are based on the results of this case.

## 8. References (10 points) – cited using the American Medical Association Style

The strength of a report is, in part, dependent on the citations referenced. The points are based on following the reference style as well as using primary research literature to support the background (literature review), case presentation (clinical findings, assessment measures, and therapeutic intervention), and discussion sections. Therefore, it is strongly encouraged that citations used in preparing the report are from the primary research literature (e.g., peer-reviewed journal articles) rather than secondary sources (e.g., internet websites).

This part of the report provides the bibliographic information for each and every source cited. The *Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals* is the stylistic standard we require for referencing. This *Uniform Requirements* style is based to a large extent on a standard adapted by the National Library of Medicine for its databases. Sample references for citation formats of the most prevalent types of material cited are available at the following sources:

[http://www.nlm.nih.gov/bsd/uniform\\_requirements.html](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/bsd/uniform_requirements.html) ,  
<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/pubs/formats/internet.pdf>, and  
<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/pubs/pubcat.html#R>.

**References should be cited using the American Medical Association (AMA) style numbered consecutively in the order in which they are first mentioned in the text.** Use superscript Arabic numerals in serve to identify references in text, tables, and legends. We recommend using a referencing software for e.g. Zotero, Endnote, or Refworks; however the author is still responsible for correct formatting even when using a reference software. All references in the reference section should be cited in the AMA style see the below sites for examples if needed:  
<http://library.nymc.edu/informatics/amastyle.cfm> or <https://library.tamu.edu/help/help-yourself/citing-sources/files/Using-the-AMA-Style.pdf> for more information.

**It is highly suggested that students read the article that the guidelines are based upon to get clear understanding of the case reporting process. The article can be found at:**  
(<http://www.ijtmb.org/index.php/ijtmb/article/view/251/303>)

### **Student Case Report Contest Awards**

#### **Grand Prize “Gold” Award**

- \$2,500.00 cash prize for the gold award winner contingent upon the winner undergoing the peer review process for the International Journal of Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork (IJTMB) or another peer reviewed scholarly journal by the appropriate deadline.\*
- Up to \$1,000.00 stipend each for the student winner and the faculty Case Report Supervisor to travel to the 2019 AMTA National Convention and present the findings.
- Invitation to submit a poster for the 2019 AMTA National Convention Poster Session.
- Local and national press releases announcing the award.
- Two personal keepsake gold plaques, one for the winning student and one for the school.

#### **Second Place “Silver” Award**

- \$2,000.00 cash prize for the silver award winner contingent upon the winner undergoing the peer review process for the International Journal of Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork (IJTMB) or another peer reviewed scholarly journal by the appropriate deadline.\*
- Invitation to submit a poster for the 2019 AMTA National Convention Poster Session.
- Local and national press releases announcing the award.
- Two personal keepsake silver plaques, one for the winning student and one for the school.

#### **Third Place “Bronze” Award**

- \$1,500.00 cash prize for the bronze award winner contingent upon the winner undergoing the peer review process for the International Journal of Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork (IJTMB) or another peer reviewed scholarly journal by the appropriate deadline.\*
- Invitation to submit a poster for the 2019 AMTA National Convention Poster Session.

- Local and national press releases announcing the award.
- Two personal keepsake bronze plaques, one for the winning student and one for the school.

#### **Honorable Mention/s**

- Links to the school website from the Foundation website, if the school has posted the case report.
- Local and national press releases announcing the award.
- Two personal keepsake certificates, one for the winning student and one for the school.

**Awards will be announced by September 2018. Student winners will have until September 30th, 2019 to complete the peer review process with a scholarly journal and redeem their cash prize. Failure to have the Case Report accepted for peer review by a scholarly journal by the deadline will result in forfeiture of the cash prize portion of award.**

**Please note that there is no guarantee that all prizes will be awarded in a given contest year.**

**Case Report Submission Deadline:** June 1, 2018. Reports must be submitted to the Massage Therapy Foundation's website at <http://www.massagetherapyfoundation.org>. The Massage Therapy Foundation is not responsible for any failures of transmission, computer hardware or software, or for any incomplete, lost, late, or damaged submissions.

**Eligibility:** The Massage Therapy Foundation's Student Case Report Contest is open to students who are 18 years of age or older at the time of entry and enrolled in a 500-hour minimum massage therapy program in the United States or abroad. Students submitting a Case Report must do so prior to their graduation date. Officers, directors, and employees of the Massage Therapy Foundation, its affiliates, agents, and its advertising and promotion agencies, and their respective immediate family members (spouse, children, parents and siblings) and those living in the same household of each (whether or not related), are not eligible to enter. Winners will be notified by email or U.S. mail. If a potential winner does not meet the eligibility requirements, or is otherwise disqualified, then an alternate winner will be selected. Return of any prize notification as non-deliverable will result in disqualification, and an alternate winner being selected.

**Judging Criteria.** Winners will be selected by a panel of independent judges qualified and chosen by the Massage Therapy Foundation in its sole discretion, using the criteria described in these guidelines. The decision of the judges is final and made at their sole and absolute discretion.

**Representations and Acknowledgements.** By entering the contest, each student represents that the Report is original and does not contain any elements that are not the student's original work. Submission of a Report acknowledges the right of the Massage Therapy Foundation to use the Report for publication and promotion at the Massage Therapy Foundation's sole discretion. Submission of a Report further constitutes permission to use the Student's name, likeness, and affiliation for promotional purposes without further compensation. All taxes due on cash awards are the winner's responsibility.



**Disqualification and Termination.** The Massage Therapy Foundation reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to disqualify any entrant and void any entries of an entrant who has engaged in misconduct relative to this contest or otherwise acted in any manner the Massage Therapy Foundation deems to be in violation of the contest rules. If, for any reason, the contest is not capable of running as planned, the Massage Therapy Foundation reserves the right at its sole discretion to cancel, terminate, modify or suspend the contest in whole or in part.

CAUTION: ANY ATTEMPT BY AN ENTRANT OR ANY OTHER INDIVIDUAL TO DELIBERATELY DAMAGE ANY WEB SITE OR UNDERMINE THE LEGITIMATE OPERATION OF THE CONTEST IS A VIOLATION OF CRIMINAL AND CIVIL LAWS AND SHOULD SUCH AN ATTEMPT BE MADE, THE MASSAGE THERAPY FOUNDATION RESERVES THE RIGHT TO SEEK DAMAGES FROM ANY SUCH PERSON TO THE FULLEST EXTENT PERMITTED BY LAW.

Please direct any questions you may have to:  
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