



Brief Summary of CA Massage Education Statistics & Thoughts

Taken from

Status and Trends in California Massage Education

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http://www.ramblemuse.com/articles/massage_training_trends.pdf



Massage Practice is Personal Care, Health Care, and Small Business

- “Massage” places numerous independent training disciplines under a single regulatory definition. Knowledge is web-like not tree-like.
- Massage is an effective tool for coping with stress
 - Simple techniques effective for symptoms of stress, anxiety, and depression.
 - More than 3 out of 5 doctors’ office visits are for stress related problems with \$300 billion, or \$7,500 per employee spent annually in the U.S.
- Well-defined training enables clinical/medical massage but outcome-based training guidelines are still preliminary and coarse-grained
- Massage is an adaptive career
 - Improving quality of life for client and practitioner
 - Can be learned and practiced in limited time around other responsibilities



California has a long history of diverse massage practice

- Well-established business models of training & practice
 - Massage training meeting diverse student needs.
 - Over 200 schools with over 18,000 annual graduates
 - Estimated 25,000 active practitioners
- Statistics of practice show
 - Extremely low likelihood of significant physical harm to clients independent of level of training
 - Some occurrence of harms of mal-intent
 - Low correlation between training hours and survival in business
 - Approximately 4% increase in survival for each doubling of hours
 - Five-year survival rates at high-end slightly lower than general small business (37.5% vs. 42%)



Massage School Statistics

- 61% of school entry programs are 250 hours or less
 - 50% of entrants to practice start with 150 hours or less
 - 76% of entrants to practice start with 250 hours or less
 - 47% of entrants are relatively insensitive to program length
 - 53% of entrants strongly target shorter programs, decreasing by half with each 58 hour increase in program length
 - Shorter programs can particularly serve those making career transitions and/or career explorations.
- 18% of entry programs are career schools with 600 hours or more
 - Financial aid targeting and growth is clearly seen at 600 and 720 hours
 - Career colleges and community colleges are fastest growing areas.
 - Future economic viability of 500 hour programs is likely limited



Current Massage Regulation

- About 30% of cities in California don't have hour requirements
- 44% of cities with hour minimums require 250 hours or less
- The variance in requirements between adjacent cities can be large
- Changes in ordinances are difficult to track and comment on
- Vagaries in regulation create, in the terminology of the Center for Public Interest Law, an external cost or market flaw.
 - creates considerable uncertainty for massage practices and schools
 - raises the cost and/or lowers the availability of massage services
 - are extremely difficult to remedy except on the state level.
- Local regulations don't provide consistent oversight for addressing harms of mal-intent



Basic State Massage Regulation Can be Designed to Benefit Consumers

- Consistently address minimal evidence-based needs for training in technique, ethics, business practices, and hygiene
- Promote rational and uniform playing field
 - Predictable, respectful, and consistent business environment
 - Potential of lowered costs and greater availability on per capita basis from targeted training and lowered permit redundancy and costs
- Address inclusion in health care & medical referrals by voluntary guidelines and certification outside of state regulation
 - Finer grain – more specific to practice intents and context
 - More flexible, need-driven training outcomes
 - Follows medical model of specialty board certifications
 - Widely accepted guidelines still need development



Concerns with mandating “National Certification” (NCTMB)

- Prerequisites would severely impact CA businesses
- Prerequisite hour breakdowns can conflict with college calendars
- Based on agenda oriented prerequisites
 - No evidence for entry-level consumer benefit from training
 - Lacks well-defined specific training outcomes
 - Does not address health-care related training issues (medical terminology, HIPAA, medical facility protocols, injury assessment)
- Accountability and Public Interest Conflicts (lack of oversight)
 - NGO approving agency (NOCA/NCCA) lacks ethics code and complaint handling; oversight by mandating agencies is indirect at best
 - Dubious Actions
 - Prerequisite change without evidence-based need, defined outcomes, sufficient review and implementation times
 - Self-serving massage safety campaign where no safety problem is evident
 - Indications that board of directors nominations are railroaded