

<b>Title</b>	<b>Comfort with benefits: the emerging presence of massage therapy in the palliative care setting</b>
Number	43
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Abstract	<p>This presentation will describe the benefits of massage as a safe and non-invasive treatment in the delivery of holistic care to palliative patients and their families. It draws on experience from within a community based palliative care service and learnings from post-graduate study in palliative care. Whilst there may be tacit acceptance of the capacity for massage to bring comfort in a general sense, it is less well understood that evidence supports the intervention of massage in addressing a range of specific issues across the palliative domains of care: physiological, psychosocial, emotional and spiritual. Such evidence applies to symptom management, for example: pain, constipation and oedema, and psychosocial issues such as: anxiety, carer burden and familial distress. The provision of massage to the palliative patient requires acquisition of specialised and modified techniques. In addition, the close interpersonal nature of massage indicates that professional development, in areas such as the principles of palliative care; assessment and communication skills; self-care practices; grief and bereavement and cultural awareness, will serve to strengthen the massage therapist's responsiveness to patient and family needs. Such comprehensive preparation equips the massage therapist to both enhance the quality of life and well-being of patients and families, and to occupy a significant and supportive role within a multi-disciplinary approach to care.</p>