

Title	Finding safe refuge in positive touch.
Number	44
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Abstract	<p>This poster presents a case study recognising the centrality of sensitivity and flexibility in meeting quality of life needs. The subject is a 70 year old woman (Mrs A) with metastatic squamous cell carcinoma for which she is no longer receiving active treatment. Mrs A is referred to massage therapy for management of lymphoedema and assistance in pain control. Mrs A presented with severe lymphoedema, an ulcerating wound proximal to the axilla, significant pain, severely impaired arm function, fatigue and significant distress. Pharmacological management for pain was in place, as was daily wound management. The treatment plan included manual lymphatic drainage, skin care and modified exercise, in keeping with best practice guidelines. Compression was not introduced because of the complicating wound and Mrs A's apprehension and discomfort. Treatment did, however, result in a notable reduction in volume and a lesser reduction in pain. Importantly, Mrs A identified that the gentle touch of MLD assisted in the regulation of anxiety. Thus, the treatment plan was adjusted to provide whole body massage, supplemented by guided breathing, mindfulness strategies and music playing to further enhance a sense of well-being. For Mrs A, the relief from suffering provided through the comfort of such touch creates a "safe refuge" and significant opportunities for reflection and emotional expression. The commentary provided by Mrs A attests to the value of this approach to care.</p>