



Career Report: Massage Therapy in Canada

This report is designed to give you some basic information on a career in Massage Therapy, to help you as you explore whether this rewarding career path is right for you.

Massage Therapy is the assessment of the soft tissue and joints of the body and the treatment and prevention of physical dysfunction and pain of the soft tissue and joints by manipulation to develop, maintain, rehabilitate or augment physical function, or relieve pain. . People turn to Massage Therapy for a variety of reasons, including treating painful ailments, alleviating tired and overworked muscles, reducing stress, rehabilitating sports injuries, and promoting general health.

As a health care professional in this field, you'll use your knowledge of the human body and the healing power of touch to help others live well.

Character Traits of Successful Massage Therapists

While there's a wide variety of Massage techniques and a broad spectrum of ways that Massage Therapy is applied, there's a certain type of person who truly excels and enjoys working in the field of Massage.

To excel in this field you'll need certain social and emotional qualities to establish a comfortable yet professional Massage Therapy environment for patients while maintaining a successful business.

Top 5 Traits of a Successful Massage Therapist...

Empathy – Massage Therapy is about providing healthcare. As a Massage Therapist, it's your job to assist patients in developing a health care plan that puts the patient's best interest first. Successful Massage Therapists must be able to demonstrate compassion, empathy and awareness of their patient's needs. Being patient centred in your approach to providing health care will help you build a therapeutic relationship that facilitates achieving the right results for your patients.

Strong Communication Skills—As a Massage Therapist, it's important to be able to actively listen to your patients' concerns with undivided attention and provide treatment that responds to those concerns.

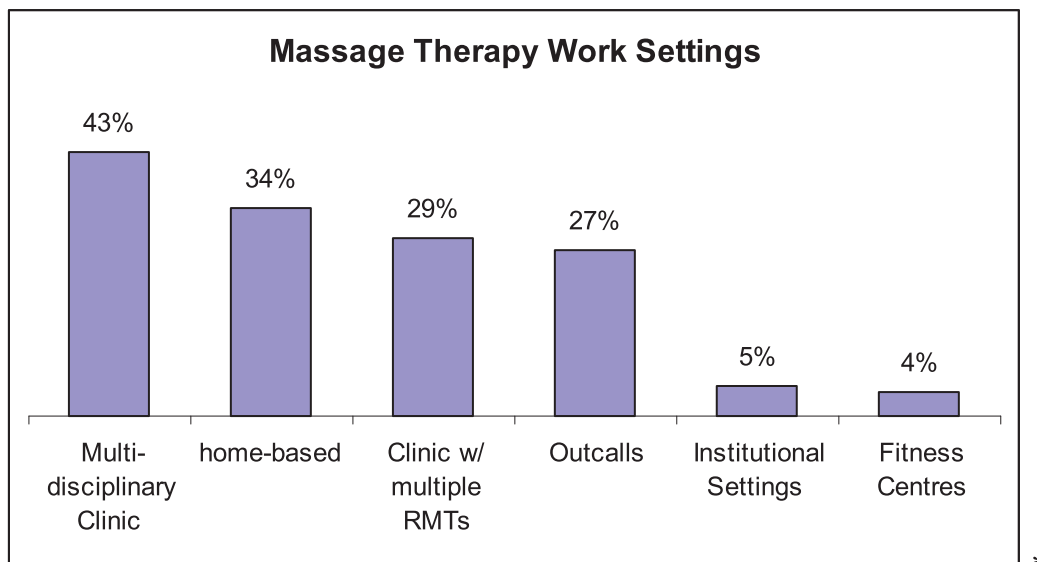
Organization —Massage Therapists are most often also entrepreneurs, which means they need to manage accounts, maintain patient records, market their practice, schedule appointments and order equipment and supplies. Staying on top of the administrative side of a business involves dedication, conscientiousness and solid time management skills; without these traits, personal and financial frustrations could mount for the business owner.

Physical Stamina—Massage Therapy is a physically demanding career. As a Massage Therapist you will likely stand for extended periods of time and must learn how to provide treatment effectively using your entire body, not just your upper body, arms or hands.

Good Personal Hygiene—A clean, professional appearance makes a significant first impression. Patients must immediately trust in the cleanliness of the massage setting and in the hygienic practices of the therapist.

If these sound like traits that you exhibit, you could be well suited to a successful career in Massage Therapy.

Massage Therapy Work Settings



It is common for full-time Massage Therapists to divide their time among several different settings, depending on their practice focus, patients and locations scheduled.

Specialize your Career

Massage Therapy is more than just techniques, it's a philosophy applied to providing health care. New techniques are being developed all the time and often, Massage Therapists take interest in a particular demographic and patient base or school of thought when it comes to techniques. In this profession, you'll not only have the opportunity to specialize in a field that interests you, but you can actively participate in the evolution of healing techniques.

Earnings*

The highest average posted fee for Massage Therapy care was found to be within the Spa sector coming in at \$82 per hour, followed by Outcalls at \$79 per hour. The lowest average posted fees were found to be within private practice at \$70 per hour, followed by Fitness Centers or Sports clubs at \$69 per hour. The median income for a Massage Therapist, as per a recent study completed by the College of Massage Therapists of Ontario is \$43,106 per year. A Massage Therapist's earnings continually rise until 6 to 10 years practicing, after which they begin to stabilize and increase at a much slower rate – which can likely be attributed to the entrepreneurial nature of building a Massage Therapy practice.

It is common to assume that the only income generator as a Massage Therapist is direct hands on care. This is not always the case and certainly as a Massage Therapist progresses in years of practice, other options for income and involvement within the profession present themselves. Interestingly, a fair amount of Massage Therapists report notable earnings from Massage related services:

1. Teaching in a massage therapy school (38%), earning an average of \$16,561;
2. Clinic management (28%), earning an average of \$13,600;
3. Sale of massage and/or health products and equipment (24%), earning an average of \$5,098;
4. Providing seminars/workshops (23%), earning an average of \$3,029;
5. Facilitating continuing education courses / tutoring (13%), earning an average of \$7,850.

All of which could be considered income on top of earnings generated in practice.

Things to Look Out for in this Career: Injuries

Because Massage Therapy is physically demanding, Massage Therapists can be subject to a variety of repetitive strain (motion) injuries. These risks can be limited by the use of proper biomechanics (posture), adequate spacing between treatments, exercise, reasonable case management and, in many cases, by the therapists themselves receiving Massage Therapy on a regular basis.

As compassionate, care giving individuals, Massage Therapists are prone to focusing primarily on putting the needs of others first but, longevity in the profession requires dedication to self care. So, if you want to enjoy a long, successful career in Massage - Don't forget to take care of yourself!

Still Not Sure if a Rewarding Career in Massage Therapy is Right for You?

The best way to know if training for a career in Massage Therapy is right for you is to come in and see for yourself just what it's like in our classroom and clinical settings. Sit in on a class, meet the instructors, get the scoop from current students, receive a treatment in our student intern clinic and meet with a knowledgeable Admissions officer to walk you through all of your options.

There's no obligation to enroll and it really is a great way to see first-hand what education in this dynamic and hands on profession is all about.

To schedule your free tour, call us today!

Victoria Campus: 250-381-9800 ext. 224

New Westminster Campus: 1-888-449-2242

Cambridge Campus: 1-877-748-7800 ext. 238

Toronto Campus: 1-877-748-7800 ext. 238

Halifax Campus: 902-484-0158

Sources:

*Survey coordinated by the RMT Management Team; Conducted by Ipsos Reid; 2009