

Thank You to the IJTMB Authors, Reviewers, and Readers

Amanda Baskwill, RMT, PhD¹*

¹Executive Editor/Editor-in-Chief, IJTMB, Loyalist College, Belleville, ON, Canada

<https://doi.org/10.3822/ijtmb.v17i4.1145>

This editorial reflects on the continued professionalization of therapeutic massage and bodywork (TMB) in 2024 through collaboration, growth, and enhanced communication, as highlighted by the *International Journal of Therapeutic Massage & Bodywork* (IJTMB). Key achievements include the publication of high-quality articles and editorials that explore diverse areas of research, clinical practice, and education. We express deep gratitude to the authors, reviewers, readers, and funders who have supported the journal's mission to advance the profession. Looking ahead to 2025, we invite continued contributions from our community and highlight an upcoming special edition on the intersection of mental health and massage therapy. As always, the journal remains a vital platform for sharing insights and fostering professional growth within the TMB field.

KEYWORDS: Gratitude; massage therapy; professionalization; reflection

INTRODUCTION

As we approach the end of another year, it is with immense gratitude that I reflect on the contributions made to the *International Journal of Therapeutic Massage & Bodywork* (IJTMB). The continued professionalization of therapeutic massage and bodywork (TMB) is a process rooted in collaboration, growth, and enhanced communication—a stage of professionalization that Jensen⁽¹⁾ emphasizes as being critical for any evolving profession. The publication of this journal stands as evidence of that progression, serving as a platform for sharing valuable insights in research, practice, and education.

None of this would be possible without the dedicated efforts of our reviewers,

whose expertise ensures the quality of every article we publish, our authors, who contribute their findings to advance the profession, and our readers, who seek to engage with and apply this growing body of knowledge. Together, we continue to advance the professionalization of TMB, forging a path toward greater recognition and integration within the broader healthcare landscape.

REFLECTION ON THE PAST YEAR

In 2024, the IJTMB continued to publish high-quality articles related to research, practice, and education for TMB practitioners, researchers, educators, students, and advocates. We have published 18 articles and 4 editorials (including this one), with Stewart-Richardson et al.'s⁽²⁾ publication, "What is Effective in Massage Therapy? Well, 'It Depends...': A Qualitative Study of Experienced Orthopaedic Massage Therapists" as one of the most downloaded articles this year, at the time of writing. We are also proud to publish the poster abstracts from the 2023 American Massage Therapy Association National Convention.⁽³⁾

Throughout this year's editorials, we have aimed to inspire contributions from researchers, practitioners, educators, and students. In March,⁽⁴⁾ we reflected on the diverse areas of research in TMB, emphasizing the ongoing need to ensure that research is relevant to clinical practice. In June,⁽⁵⁾ we highlighted the importance of integrating evidence-based practice to bridge the gap between research and its application, encouraging collaboration between researchers and practitioners. In September,⁽⁶⁾ we turned our focus to the future of massage therapy education, discussing the challenges of standardization and the opportunities for innovation. Together, these reflections call on the

community to share their expertise, contribute to the journal, and help advance the professionalization of TMB.

Looking back on this past year, it is clear that we have made significant strides as a profession. From advancing research to enhancing clinical and educational practices, the contributions from our community have been invaluable. Each step forward has been supported by the collaborative spirit of our authors, reviewers, and readers. As we celebrate these achievements, we also pause to express our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who has played a role in our shared success.

GRATITUDE

We extend our gratitude to our authors, whose courage and dedication have been the driving force behind the advancement of knowledge in our field. By sharing their findings and engaging in the publication process, they have not only contributed to the growth of TMB but have also allowed us all to benefit from their insights and experiences. It takes great commitment to put one's work forward for peer review, and we honor their willingness to lead the way in expanding the profession's knowledge base. Their contributions inspire us all and help shape the future of our practice.

We are also incredibly grateful to our reviewers, whose thoughtful and diligent efforts are at the heart of the journal's success. Being a reviewer is no easy task—many of us have felt the weight of responsibility in assessing someone else's work, questioning whether we possess all the expertise needed. Yet, there is an art to providing constructive feedback that helps authors refine and better communicate their findings, and our reviewers rise to that challenge.

Our deepest appreciation goes to our readers, without whom all this work would have no lasting impact. By dedicating your time and attention to engaging with the journal, you ensure that the knowledge shared here continues to contribute to the advancement of the TMB profession. More than just absorbing information, you take these insights into the world—into your discussions with colleagues, into your practices, and into the broader healthcare community—helping to spread and apply what you have learned. Your role in carry-

ing this knowledge forward is vital to the professionalization and growth of the field.

Finally, we would like to express our sincere gratitude to our funders, the Massage Therapy Foundation and the Registered Massage Therapists' Association of British Columbia. Their unwavering support allows the IJTMB to continue its mission of advancing the profession through the dissemination of research, practice, and education. Without their generous contributions, the journal would not be able to fulfill its role in fostering the professionalization of TMB. We are deeply thankful for their commitment to ensuring that this knowledge reaches the community and strengthens the profession.

LOOKING AHEAD

As we look ahead to 2025, we invite you, our readership, to continue contributing your valuable experience and expertise to the IJTMB. Your diverse perspectives are what drive the journal forward, enriching our collective understanding and shaping the future of TMB. Collaboration and shared knowledge are the foundations of our professional growth, and we encourage practitioners, researchers, educators, and students to engage with the journal—whether by submitting research, sharing clinical insights, or offering educational innovations. Together, we can ensure that the IJTMB remains a dynamic and inclusive platform for all.

We are excited to announce that 2025 will feature a special edition dedicated to the critical intersection of mental health and massage therapy. Mental health is an increasingly recognized component of holistic care, and massage therapy plays a vital role in supporting emotional well-being alongside physical health. This special edition will explore the role of massage therapy in mental health care, offering evidence-based approaches and innovative practices. We encourage submissions from all communities and welcome your participation in this important conversation.

CONCLUSION

To all of you, thank you for your commitment to both this journal and the profession. Your efforts ensure that the IJTMB remains a vital source of knowledge

and a symbol of our collective progress. As we close out this year, we reflect on the remarkable contributions that have strengthened both the journal and the profession. Looking ahead to 2025, we are excited about the opportunities for growth and collaboration that lie ahead. Whether through submitting articles, volunteering as reviewers, or sharing your feedback, your involvement will continue to shape the future of TMB.

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Corresponding author: Amanda Baskwill, Executive Editor/Editor-in-Chief, IJTMB, Loyalist College, Belleville, ON, Canada
E-mail: ExecEditor@ijtmb.org