

educator news march 2017

2017 Classified Massage Therapy research database

AMT recently released an updated classified massage therapy research database. The new edition features a swag of new references, including a growing number of studies that are available as full free access. The database embeds hyperlinks direct to research citations that are open access - an invaluable resource for students.

You can download the database here:

<http://www.amt.org.au/downloads/practice-resources/AMT-Classified-Research-January-2017.pdf>

A number of RTOs have approached AMT about putting the database on their student portals. We would encourage all educators to disseminate the database as widely as possible; it is freely available to be downloaded from the public domain. We would obviously appreciate acknowledgement of the source.

AMT has also released an updated version of the evidence summary at the beginning of the database, which gives a broad overview of the Level 1 studies (systematic reviews) of massage therapy. We've received a bit of an international bollocking on social media over the past week for not highlighting the limitations of the quoted systematic reviews and have been accused of "reference dumping" in an attempt to make massage look "sciency". While this was certainly not AMT's intention, we're excited by the ensuing dialogue and fully support critical analysis of the evidence. The discussion itself would make a great class exercise in research literacy and the power of social media to shape health messaging! We hope that the art of massage never gets lost in the drive to find underpinning mechanisms of action.

If you're interested, the evidence summary is available for download here:

<http://www.amt.org.au/downloads/practice-resources/AMT-State-of-Evidence-January-2017.pdf>

Mandatory Criminal Checks

Late last year, the AMT Board made a formal resolution to introduce mandatory criminal checks for practising members, commencing in 2017. AMT plans to roll out the requirement to undergo a criminal check for new applicants by mid-2017, with current members being required to comply by 1 July 2018.

The commitment to introduce mandatory criminal checks is part of AMT's broader commitment to public safety. It will bring AMT members more in line with the regulatory requirements for registered health professionals and, along with the AMT Code of Ethics and Code of Practice, will help us to promote AMT members as a safe and ethical choice for members of the public. It will send a clear and unequivocal



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message that AMT is committed to the highest possible preventive measures to protect the public from inappropriate conduct.

As we roll out the criminal check program over the next 18 months, we will be providing members with information and resources to make the process as smooth and seamless as possible.

The initiative is not designed to pick up minor offences like shoplifting, road traffic offences or minor drug and alcohol offences. Rather, it is designed to screen for serious indictable offences that may impact on a person's capacity to practise massage therapy safely and honestly, for example, a sexual assault conviction or a dishonesty offence, such as one involving fraud.

If you have any queries, concerns or comments, please let AMT know. We're more than happy to field any questions and provide members with support to get on board.

AMT has written to other industry associations inviting them to cooperate with this initiative. We hope this will become an industry-wide requirement, in the interests of enhancing public protection for those seeking massage therapy.

Health funds in hot water with the ACCC

Last year, the competition watchdog commenced proceedings against Medibank for misleading and unconscionable conduct. The action relates to the insurers' failure to give notice to members of its decision to limit benefits for in-hospital pathology and radiology services.

This week, the ACCC announced that it plans to take legal action against more private health insurers in 2017, saying "many patients are being slugged with unexpected hefty bills after hospital visits". The Sydney Morning Herald reports that ACCC chairman Rod Sims felt a mixture of "surprise" and "horror" after reading stories of how some patients were treated by private health insurers. Full story here:

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-02-23/more-health-insurers-to-face-court-for-consumer-rip-offs/8298140?pfmredir=sm>

Although the proposed ACCC actions relate to hospital cover, it underscores the pattern that has evolved in recent years for private insurers to charge higher premiums while covering less, including ancillary services such as massage therapy.

AMT keeps members and the general public informed of these developments via our public Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/amtaustralia/>

AMT Annual General Meeting

AMT has announced the program for the 2017 AGM. The meeting will be held in Perth, incorporating two one-day workshops and a networking event. There is a special student rate for the workshops. Full program details here:

<http://www.amt.org.au/downloads/workshop-registrations/2017-AGM-workshop-notice.pdf>