

# Conference Case Study Scholarship Report

My journey to winning the Conference Case Study Scholarship Award.



| Garry Lavis, Andrea Pluck and Selena Hagan

**R**eceiving the scholarship for my case study on 'The Improvement of Quality of Life in Head and Neck Cancer Patients' at the 2024 Massage & Myotherapy Australia National Conference was an incredible honour that filled me with immense gratitude. When I received the initial phone call to advise me that I had been selected as the winner of the scholarship, I was overjoyed and somewhat in disbelief. It felt surreal to be recognised in such a significant way.

This experience not only validated my hard work but also inspired me to pursue my academic and professional goals with renewed vigour and determination.

## Preparing for the Presentation

Choosing to do a case study on this topic was a natural decision for me because of my deep interest in cancer related lymphoedema. This topic has always fascinated me since I first became qualified in decongestive lymphatic therapy, and I wanted to share my passion and insights with other therapists.

As I prepared to share my case study with you all, I was reminded of the profound impact that massage therapy can have on the lives of individuals. Through my presentations, I hope to not only have showcased the effectiveness of my approach but also inspire others to explore innovative techniques and methodologies in their own practice.

The preparation process for the conference was intense and rewarding as I tried to put together a presentation that was detailed and informative but also relevant

to massage therapists. And yes, I spent countless hours rehearsing in front of my patient and tolerant husband who, by the time I actually stood in front of all of you, probably could have done the presentation verbatim!

## The Presentation Experience

The Twin Towns Conference & Function Centre buzzed with excitement and energy from the moment we arrived on the Friday night to the minute the conference concluded on the Sunday. Presenting to an audience of peers, was both exhilarating and nerve-wracking.

As I stood before the audience, I felt a mix of excitement and nervousness. However, once I began speaking, my passion for the topic took over and I felt more at ease. A particularly memorable moment was when someone asked about the psychosocial effects of the outcome of the study. It was a spontaneous question that suddenly brought back all the emotions of the study and made me realise the importance of our work.

The positive feedback I received after my presentation was incredibly encouraging. Several delegates approached me to express their appreciation for my work. Their feedback was invaluable and reinforced my belief in the importance of my topic.

I absolutely enjoyed the whole experience, made many new connections and re-connected with others.

## Reflection and Future Goals

From this experience, I learned the importance and value of hard work, perseverance, and the ability to articulate complex ideas clearly and confidently. It has helped me grow in a personal as well as in a professional way, enhancing my public speaking skills and boosting my self-confidence.

Moving forward, I plan to do more case studies on cancer related lymphoedema, running more workshops and webinars, and working on specific projects that align with my interests and the insights gained from this experience. This scholarship has been



instrumental in helping me achieve these aspirations and I hit the ground running upon my return to South Australia.

I am committed to making the most of this opportunity and contributing meaningfully to the massage industry. This recognition has not only motivated me but also provided me with the means to pursue my goals with greater focus and determination.

## Conclusion

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to everyone who supported me throughout this journey. Your encouragement, guidance and belief in me were invaluable. This scholarship has been a significant milestone in my journey as a massage therapist, and I am excited about the future and the possibilities that lie ahead.

This experience has been transformative, and I am deeply grateful for the recognition and support. I look forward to the opportunities that this scholarship has opened up and am eager to continue to make a positive impact in the massage industry as well as the lives of my clients.

Thank you to Massage & Myotherapy Australia for this scholarship.

**Andrea Pluck, (Diploma Remedial Therapies, Decongestive Lymphatic Therapy, Oncology Massage, Cert IV in Training and Assessment, Pilates, Pregnancy Massage).**