



Contact:  
Nora Brunner  
800-458-2267, ext. 647  
nora@abmp.com

April 22, 2010

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**ABMP RELEASES NEW DATA ON  
MESSAGE THERAPIST POPULATION**

(Golden, Colo., April 22) – The number of massage therapists in the United States has grown by more than 16,000 in the past two years, according to new research by Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals (ABMP). The biennial research has been conducted by ABMP since 1998.

According to ABMP, the number of U.S. massage therapists as of January 2010 was 293,531. This represents an increase of 5.4 percent from the last estimate of 278,089, conducted in January 2008.

The figure was based on state licensing lists and estimates from primary membership organizations and state populations. General receptivity to massage in particular regions was also considered in the estimation process.

“Massage continues to gain respect from the public and health professionals as a relaxing and restorative way to promote health and reduce stress,” says Les Sweeney, nationally certified massage therapist and ABMP president. “While the rate of growth for massage therapists entering the profession has understandably slowed, there are still many people seeking massage therapy as a career. Massage has often attracted career changers in the past; now it’s even more attractive to people who want a second job because of the economy.”

-- more --

California continues to lead the pack in the number of therapists, with an estimated 41,645. The state with the fewest massage therapists is North Dakota, with just 599.

The per capita, or number of U.S. citizens per massage therapist, has continued to decrease as a result of the growth in massage therapists. This means there are more massage therapists to serve the population.

“The growth has been remarkable,” Sweeney says. “In 1998, there was an estimated one massage therapist for every 1,941 people in the United States. The current estimate is one massage therapist for every 1,036 people.”

While the growth of the field has been impressive over the decade, Sweeney cautions against the conclusion that growth is a detriment for active practitioners. “More qualified practitioners who can provide services to the public are a good thing,” he says. “After all, when you contrast the 293,000-plus massage therapists with the more than 3 million registered and licensed practical nurses, an estimated 600,000 physicians and surgeons, and the more than 600,000 cosmetologists in the United States, you can see there’s still plenty of room for those considering massage therapy careers.”

ABMP is the nation’s largest massage membership association with more than 71,000 massage therapist members. Headquartered in Golden, Colo., ABMP is celebrating its 22<sup>nd</sup> year serving the massage therapy profession.

###