



NHS
National Institute for
Health Research

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Dear Dr Ali

Subject: Marma massage project in Stroke and Dr Michael Dixon

I am writing to introduce myself and ask if I may come and meet you. I work in Exeter with Dr Martin James and I am interested in designing and undertaking a research study looking at the effectiveness of Marma massage in Stroke Rehabilitation. This would be a follow on to the pilot project (paper enclosed) which I understand you were very involved in a few years ago and which features on your website.

I have written the enclosed summary to give you an idea of my thoughts and met with Dr Dixon before Christmas to discuss the project; he kindly rang you at the time and obtained your agreement to see me. I have your mobile number but do not feel comfortable just ringing you so I thought I would write with further information first.

I am currently reviewing related literature, reading information about Ayurvedic techniques and learning as much as I can about Marma massage. I am keen to ensure that the technique researched could be made available across the NHS should it prove helpful and realise that this may prove difficult.

My interest in this topic stems from my enthusiasm for improving Stroke care, the interest of Dr James and the fact that the more I read about it the more the rationale for it working seems to make sense.

Just for your background information I am a trained nurse, with a degree in biological science and an MSc in clinical research, I am a qualified Massage therapist and Reflexologist and have practised simple Acupuncture in the past. Currently I manage a stroke research network which provides trained professionals to support research studies across the South West of England. I am interested in the integration of the biomedical and other traditional models. As part of my recent reading I have been struck by the similarities between some Ayurvedic approaches and those of traditional Chinese medicine particularly relating to acupuncture and I am very keen to learn and understand more.

Dr James showed me the pilot project as he knew I was interested in this area and also keen to find a topic that would be suitable for a PhD application.

This project fascinates me and brings together many of my key interests, the similarity to acupuncture and the links between Chinese and Indian approaches are something that I have only just begun to explore. I have the knowledge and expertise to run a large multi centred study in the UK on a practical level but I am determined to ensure that the protocol has been well thought through and that we have a sound argument for continuing to research Marma massage as a rehabilitation treatment for stroke. I feel that due to the lack of literature our argument for researching it in the UK would need to be based on its success and continued use in India.

I know you were key to the original project and I very much hope you will be interested in my proposal and therefore I would very much welcome the opportunity to meet you.

As well as a general discussion of the project I would appreciate your views on a number of things (some of which I am sure I won't have thought of!), these would include:

1. The pilot study and any other studies you are involved in at present
2. My suggested study, the overall design e.g. treatment, the training of the therapists, the groups etc.
3. Marma and its effects as I would like to ensure we are measuring the correct outcomes
4. The use of Marma in India today and contacts that I can link with in India to discuss the role of Marma and perhaps explore the possibility of doing the same project in India as we want to do over here.
5. Any literature you have on Stroke treatments / studies you or your colleagues have done on the effects of Marma as I am finding it difficult to obtain any literature looking at Marma massage.
6. Further information about your work in India and experience with stroke patients in general

From a professional and personal perspective and I passionately interested in enabling people with chronic conditions to regain control and help themselves to regain the best health and function possible. My background in chronic pain has shown me many parallels in stroke such as loss of confidence, depression, dependence on the medical profession and an expectation of instant cure.

I would be most grateful if you could meet me when convenient in the near future. I realise you are very busy and are probably already very booked up; could you let me know the best way to arrange to see you about this.

On the off chance, I will be in London as part of my job on the 11th March, at a meeting from 1030 to 1630, if you happening to have any time early or later that day or on the 12th.

Thank you
Best Wishes



Jacqueline Briggs MSc, BSc, RGN
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