

Examining Non-Compliance in Licensing Requirements among Asian-Pacific Islander Massage Practitioners



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Objectives

- To identify any barriers that hinder licensing of Asian-Pacific Islander community members who practice massage.
- To recommend ways to make massage education and licensing processes more culturally responsive to API massage practitioners' needs.

Timeline and Research Process

● November 2014 ~ February 2015

- 23 interviews
- 22 interviews in three languages other than English
- Notes were transcribed and key themes were identified.

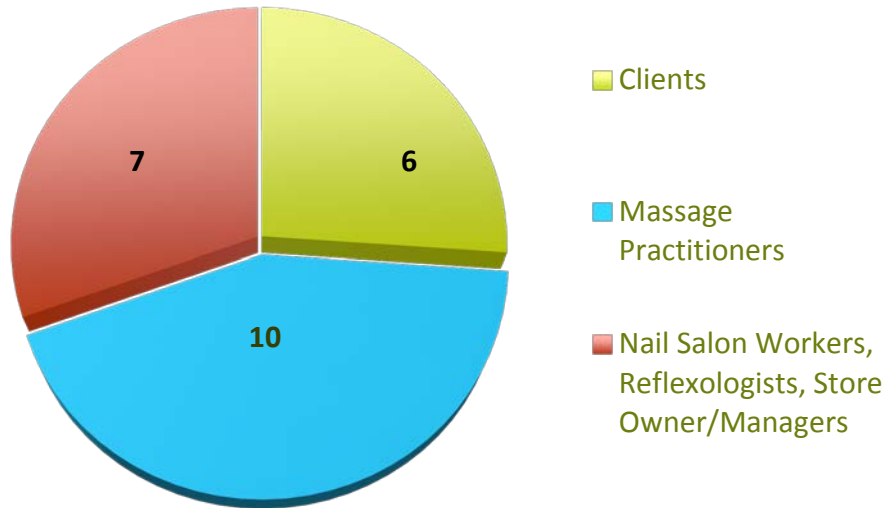
● February ~ March 2015

- Data analysis
- Recommendations were developed.

● September ~ December 2014

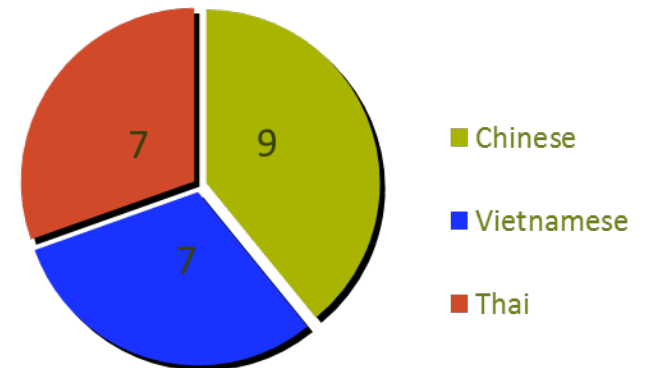
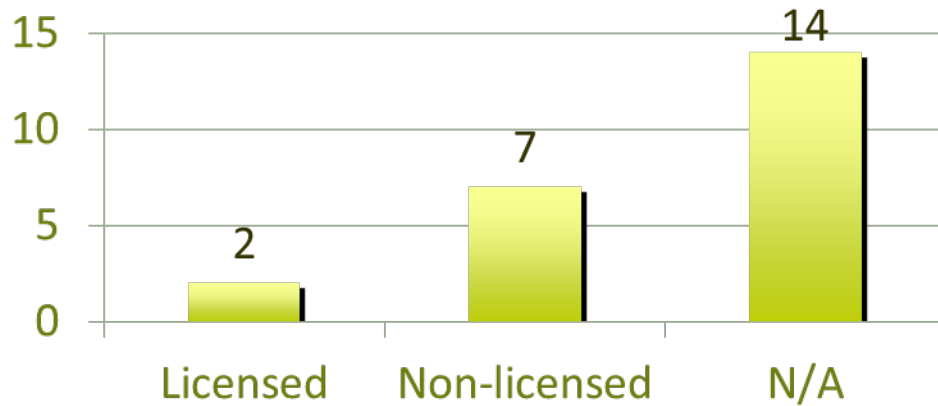
- A multicultural project team
- Institutional Review Board (IRB) for conducting interviews.

Interviewee Profiles



19 Female

4 Male



Categories for Key Findings

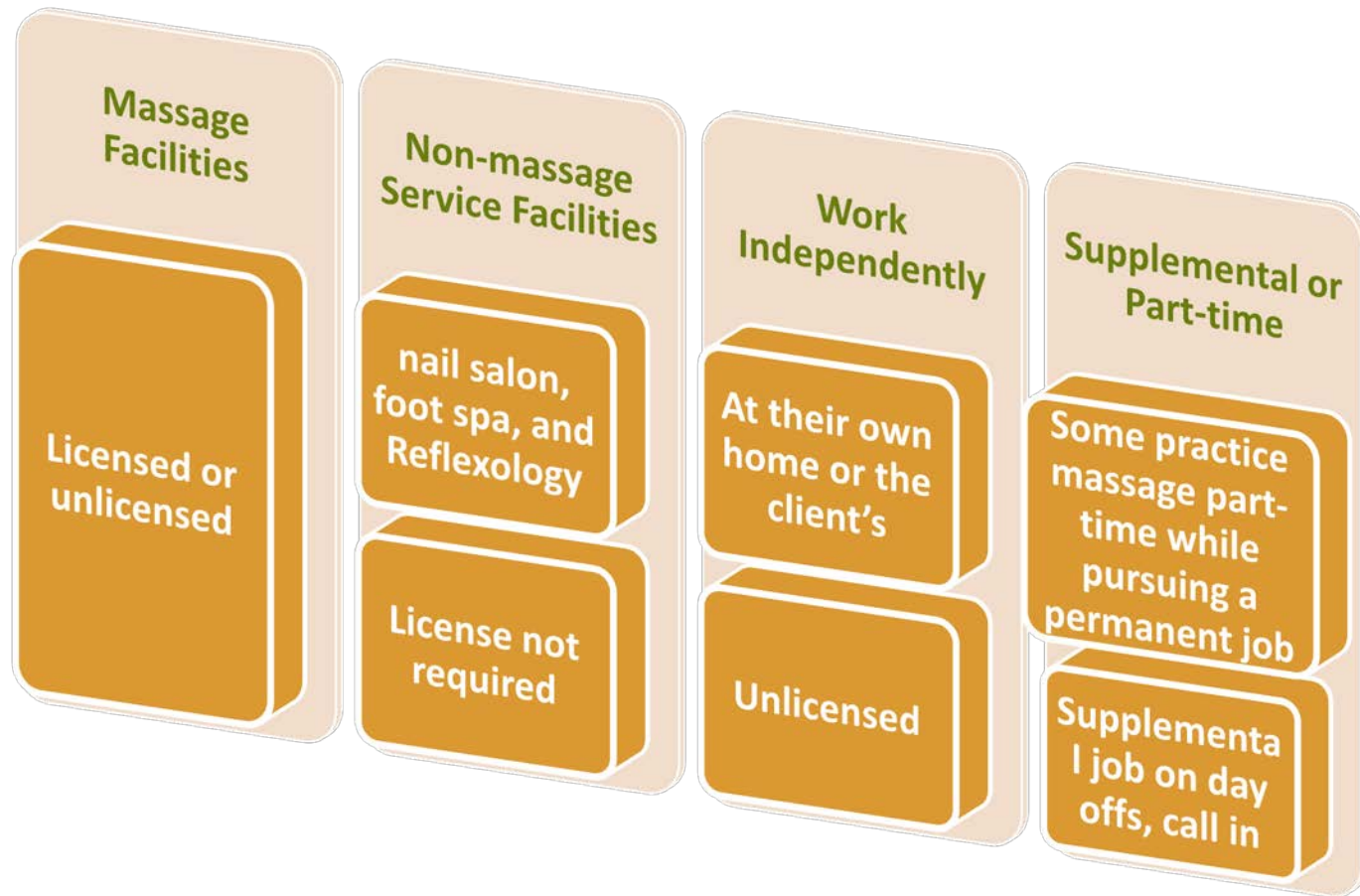
- I. General Background of the API Massage Practitioners
- II. Where and How API Massage Practitioners Work
- III. The API Massage Practitioners' Perspectives on Licensing
- IV. Key Reasons for Practicing Massage without A License

NOTE: The term “massage practitioner” is used broadly to refer to those who practice massage, but who may or may not be licensed.

I. General Background of the API Massage Practitioners

- First generation immigrants, hoping to make a better living, to unite with family
- Educational level was not high
- Had some massage training before
- Were not eligible to work when first came because of immigration status.

II. Where and How API Massage Practitioners Work



III. API Massage Practitioners' Perspectives on Licensing

Lack of awareness:
didn't know the requirements

Info inaccuracy:
info obtained through friends and
colleagues

Licensing process is hard:
Language barrier, difficult
knowledge, costly, time-consuming

Is it worth it?

IV. Key Reasons for Unlicensed Practicing

**Difficulty
understanding the
licensing process**

**Lacked sufficient
English proficiency
to pass the
examination**

**Lacked financial
resources for
licensing**

**Did not want to
invest the time to
prepare for the
examination**

**Lacked sufficient
education to master
the examination
content**

IV. Key Reasons for Unlicensed Practicing (cont.)

**Concerned about their
immigration status**

**Did not consider massage
therapy to be a
professional occupation
that warrants licensing**

**Massage as a temporary
or supplementary job
and did not feel that
licensing was worthwhile**

**Thought they were
capable of providing
massage services, did not
see the need to be
licensed**

**Employers and clients
hire unlicensed massage
practitioners**

Recommendations

I. Improve dissemination of information about licensing requirements

- Provide licensing information in multiple languages
- Reach out to API massage practitioner communities
- Educate massage clients about licensure requirements.

II. Provide educational support for massage therapist training

- Develop scholarship-type program for the massage therapist training
- Develop internship program for the massage therapist training
- Develop multi-language massage therapist training program.

III. Improve accessibility for licensure examination

- Provide multi-language support for the examination
- Provide multi-layer licensure qualifications

IV. Enforce licensure requirements in a consistent and equitable manner

V. Develop trust and relationship with the community

THANK YOU!