

Why I Review

By Grace Dedinsky-Rutherford BSc RMT, Vodder therapist



6 years have passed since I last wrote my reflection on keeping up my Vodder Recertification. Many things in my life have changed as has in all of yours. I still come to the same thought every once in a while.

To keep your Certification and listed with the Vodder School, a review must be completed every two years. My name is Grace and this is my 9th review. I am an RMT in North Vancouver, BC where I have the honour of having 500 Lymphedema patients in my flock, treating 10-12 hours a day, 5 days a week as well as treating some patients on my two days off. I have a 4 month wait list with 10 new patient requests a week. I will get a new Lymphedema patient in for a consultation as soon as I can so I can assess, plan for treatment or outsource to another Vodder Therapist.

So why do I really need to Re-certify if I certainly have more patients than I can treat in a normal week? Why do I put out the time and the money when having my name taken off the Vodder list would have no impact on me as my current load is heavy enough?

There are 4 answers I have for this.

1. Even though I use MLD for the majority of my day, over the last 2 ½ days of my review, Robert Harris and Prof. Hildegard Wittlinger with their instruction were able to refine and improve my techniques. All of us have room for improvement. When we stop being open to learn, we stop growing and that is very sad. I am very appreciative that Robert and Hildegard with their years of experience were able to make my hands treat more effectively the true Vodder technique for the benefit of my patients and keep the respect of the Vodder name thriving.
2. Being with other Therapists from all over the world at reviews is an environment of sharing experiences, problems, ideas and professional bonding that you cannot do on a day to day basis alone out there in your clinics. The environment of the review allows for so much growth and making new friends at the same time.
3. One other point to consider is to think of the patients **you have not treated yet**. Those who may be going through their cancer treatment right now and may develop some swelling sometime in the next while. When they start to research on the internet searching under swelling, cancer, arm, leg, face and they learn the word Lymphedema, they will then come to the Vodder website. The first shred of information about their condition they have come across is at their fingertips. Now they are going to look for someone in their community. Hold on, no they aren't as you have decided not to Re-certify and your name is not on the list. Deflated, the patient in search of help ends up at a dead end with no one in their area. The patient determined to get some answers looks to see who is remotely close and for example, sees my name, email and website for contact. Desperate to find out how she or he can move forward with their swollen, heavy, painful limb, an email pops up on my phone from a new request. As I get out of treatment, I walk to my reception area waiting for my patient to come out and I am reading this new patient's email with their questions. I answer back saying I can provide them with information and either treatment with me or another colleague and one minute later I get

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a reply back from her saying **“Thank you- this is the first positive feedback I have received in a long time.”** Replies like that are why I stay Re-certified. I have so many emails like this that I keep them to remind me when I am in doubt of what I am doing. Even if I couldn't fit this patient in, I was able to be there while they searched for help, which is priceless. Think about being in your patients shoes looking for help and not having anyone to turn to.

4. Lastly, and PLEASE READ THIS ONE.....If this does not impact you then there is nothing else I can say. I moved clinics on April 2nd after being 11 years in my 4th location over 25 years. I moved into my Pilate's Instructors new studio only a few blocks from my last location. As I worked on files waiting for my patient to come out of treatment, the next Pilates client came in for my colleague. The Pilates Instructor said to her next client “Oh, do you know Grace?” I looked up into these lovely eyes and I smiled greeting her. She replied “Oh Yes, I know Grace. You treated my Mom.” I looked at her smile again and said back “Yes, they were visiting from Calgary. I came in on a Sunday after Church.” She replied “Yes, you taught my Father and I what we could do to help give my Mother some comfort. You spent 2 hours with us just that one day and then we returned to Calgary. It was the ONLY thing that gave my Mother any comfort and it helped my Father out with giving her some ease in her last days. She passed away over 7 years ago. Thank you so much for helping us out that day.” It was just one day, 7 years ago and what an impact that had on them because I knew how to help them. Okay, I have tears in my eyes just typing this and I know this touches all of you as well, as you would not put yourselves out there to help your patients every day if you did not care and have compassion.

So, for those of you who have let your recertification go or you are coming up to your 2 year window, think about those patients out there that need your help. Think of those who may not find out about MLD and CDT because you weren't listed as a certified Vodder therapist when they needed your help. You may need your continued education credits for your educational cycles, it is a business write off (sitting in Florida in January wearing shorts is pretty awesome 😊) and you become better in your skills doing it. What more can I say.

JUST DO IT!

With Sincere Love and Fondness for you all,
Grace Dedinsky-Rutherford BSc RMT

www.northshoremphedemaclinic.wordpress.com

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