

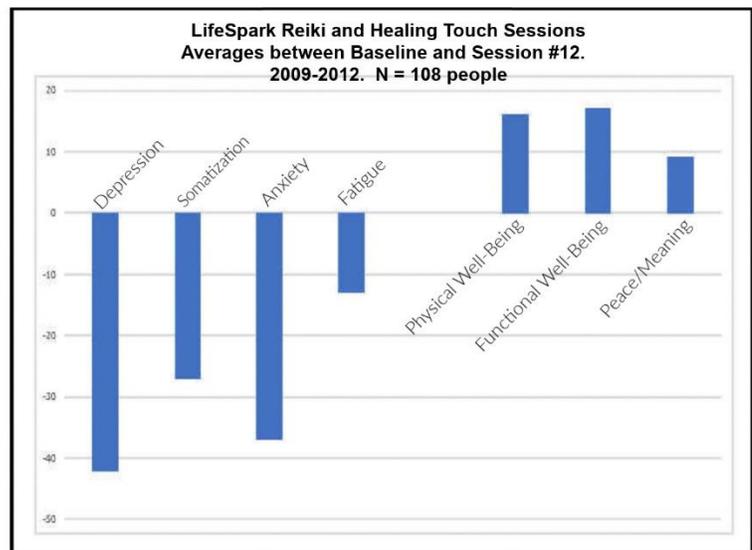
Reiki lowers stress and pain for hundreds with cancer

LifeSpark Cancer Resources is a service program for cancer patients based in Denver, Colorado. In any given week, 50-70 individuals with cancer and their caregivers are receiving Reiki or Healing Touch (HT) through the LifeSpark program. Nearly 90 Reiki and HT volunteers (two-thirds of whom are Reiki trained) are providing this service.



In our weekly program, healing sessions are provided for eight weeks. If the diagnosis is invasive cancer, or if there are other challenging factors, we approve additional sessions, and our volunteer providers often stay with these patients for extended timeframes. The bond of trust that develops is a key aspect of what makes this program so effective. The deeper the trust, the more effective the sessions can be because the patient is more open to change. Over time, we often see profound shifts in their physical and mental health, and while we help many late-stage patients “cross over”, many others go into complete remission, or remain functioning even with “terminal” cancer.

A number of years ago, we conducted an informal study of our weekly hands-on program. Surveys were filled out by 108 LifeSpark participants in-person before the first and before the twelfth sessions. (At that time our program was 3 months long.) Results showed statistically significant improvements in physical and emotional states. Depression, somatization, anxiety and fatigue decreased while physical well-being, functional well-being and peace/meaning improved.

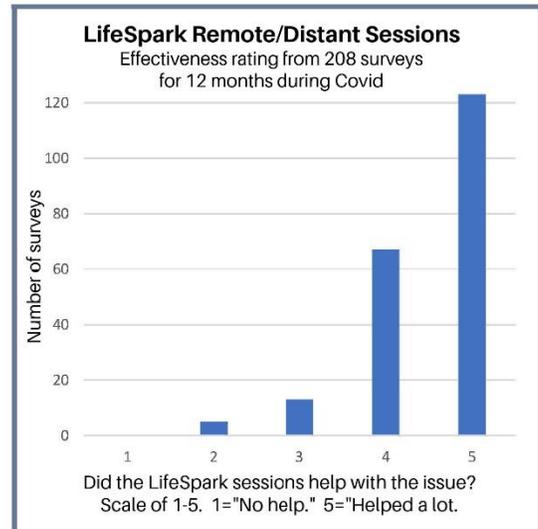


Distant Reiki

Before COVID-19, all sessions were conducted in-person at local massage studios, churches, and spas. However, in March of 2020, when the pandemic happened, LifeSpark switched to remote/distant sessions to keep everyone safe. Our protocol was (and still is) to connect by Zoom, so that the patient and practitioner can see each other and have a conversation. Then the patient is asked to lie down and take their phone with them. The LifeSpark provider then plays pre-recorded guided imagery through Zoom while delivering a full Reiki or Healing Touch session.

In July of 2020 we began sending surveys via email the first week of each month to the recipients of our program.

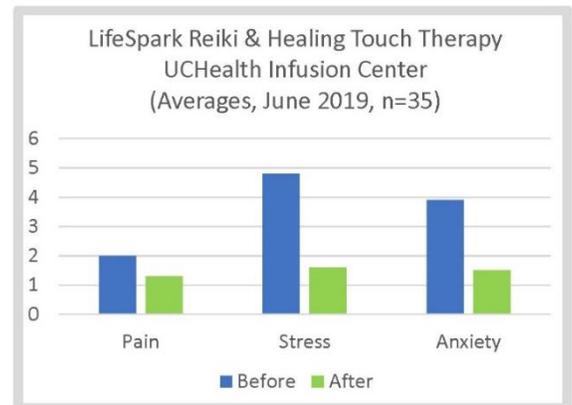
Between July 1/2020 and June 31/2021, 1,837 distant sessions were delivered to 164 people, and 208 surveys were filled out. Participants reported that stress, pain, and depression were the top issues, and on a five-point scale, 91% rated the distant sessions as helpful by scoring the sessions at a 4 or 5.



LifeSpark Hospital Program

LifeSpark also has a hospital-based program. Volunteer Reiki and HT providers deliver sessions at UHealth Anschutz Cancer Center in Aurora, Denver Health Medical Center in Denver, and Memorial Hospital in Colorado Springs. We offer 15-20 minute sessions to people in the infusion centers while they receive chemotherapy. In each case, we work closely with the nursing staff, who direct us to the patients who they feel would benefit the most. Although we were not in these facilities during COVID-19, as of August 2021, we have been welcomed back by all three hospitals.

In 2019, the last full year of our presence before COVID-19, we provided 719 sessions at UHealth Anschutz Cancer Center. Their staff created a before and after self-report survey for patients receiving our therapies at their Infusion Center. Thirty-five patients participated, and their responses showed that pain dropped by about a third, and stress and anxiety dropped by about two-thirds after just one session.



Reiki volunteers

Reiki and Healing Touch volunteers are brought into our program several times a year through an 18-hour onboarding Provider Seminar. The training covers active listening, self-awareness, how to talk about our therapies, professionalism, and many other topics, and helps standardize the LifeSpark sessions throughout our many sites.

To be eligible for the LifeSpark program, volunteers must be at least Reiki II or Healing Touch Level II

trained, and have completed 50 full healing sessions. For those who wish to work in a hospital, there are additional requirements. To learn more visit our website at www.LifeSparkNow.org.

What is next

Although we are slowly returning to hands-on sessions at our many partner locations, we will never completely return to pre-pandemic single mode delivery. Remote sessions are here to stay. We now have an option for those who are unable to meet with us in-person, and it has made our program accessible in so many new ways.

We are grateful that Reiki has helped us adapt to the shifting needs in our communities. In these unprecedented times, LifeSpark will continue to bring peace and healing to all of those that we are meant to serve.



Sandy Priester is Executive Director and co-founder of LifeSpark Cancer Resources, a sixteen-year-old Colorado-based non-profit organization. She is a Usui/Holy Fire III Reiki Master and Karuna Reiki Master, a Certified Healing Touch Practitioner, and has an MBA. She lives in Arvada, Colorado with her husband Bob, cat Davis, and dog Cocoa. You may contact her at sandy@lifesparknow.org, or visit www.LifeSparkNow.org.