



PO Box 45734
London SW16 5WJ

T: 0208 835 7006
F: 0208 835 7057
E: mail@nhsta.org.uk
W: www.nhsta.org.uk

NHSTA Directory of Complementary and Alternative Practitioners

Dear Colleague.

Following the Report of the Scientific & Technology Committee of the House of Lords on the subject of Complementary and Alternative Medicine - the so-called "Sixth Report" - it became apparent to the NHSTA that there was a need for a dedicated resource enabling GPs to identify those complementary practitioners who had a commitment to working with and treating NHS patients.

As the Association is sure you are aware, there is a growing enthusiasm for alternative and complementary medicine among the general public, and many patients report benefits derived from such treatments.

Prior to the launch of the Directory there was a multiplicity of websites and organizations offering varying degrees of information. Identifying a suitably qualified and conveniently located practitioner of complementary medicine was often a time-consuming and inefficient process, involving the search of many websites - where such websites were available - or otherwise making phone calls and writing letters: none of this being time cost-effective for a busy GP.

The NHSTA has worked in partnership with the Department of Health and leading CAM organizations in developing the Directory as an NHS healthcare resource to enable you, the doctor, to identify suitably qualified therapists practising locally to your patients, based on the categories set out in their Lordships' report.

The Directory is available in hard copy free of charge (other than postage), or online free of charge at www.nhstadirectory.org

All members of the Directory have completed a thorough and detailed questionnaire on their experience, qualifications and fees, the treatments they are able to offer, their membership of reputable professional organizations, and their willingness to treat NHS patients. They have also been required to furnish evidence of their insurance status.

The NHSTA has verified that all who are accepted into the Directory are members in good standing of one or more of the recognized professional organizations controlling the therapy they practise. [In the case of Chiropractors and Osteopaths, they are all verified members of the General Chiropractic Council (GCC) or General Osteopathic Council (GOsC).] This unique, and rapidly growing, dedicated healthcare resource will, we believe, provide GPs who wish to utilize complementary therapy with a definitive source of suitable therapists.

Please contact us with any queries or comments you may have. We should be glad to hear from you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'David Tod'.

Dr David Tod, OBE, M.B., Ch.B (Edin.), FRCGP, DipCrim(Lon.)
Chief Executive NHSTA

Honorary Chairman - Dr Jonathan Leach, MB ChB, MSc, FRCGP, DRCOG
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