



## **The Association of Traditional Chinese Medicine (UK)**

**ATCM, 5A Grosvenor House, 1 High Street, Edgware, London HA8 7TA**  
**Tel/Fax: 020 8951 3030 Email: [info@atcm.co.uk](mailto:info@atcm.co.uk) Website [www.atcm.co.uk](http://www.atcm.co.uk)**

### **PUBLIC SAFETY BEST SERVED BY STATUTORY REGULATION OF COMPLEMENTARY MEDICINE**

An unexpected Government reversal of plans for Statutory Regulation of complementary medicine, announced today by Andy Burnham, Health Secretary, is strongly criticised by The Association of Traditional Chinese Medicine (UK). "Ten years ago the House of Lords Select Committee report on Complementary and alternative Medicine suggested statutory regulation for herbal medicine and acupuncture and since then the Government has worked to introduce such regulation. The ACTM has been actively involved in contributing to the Department of Health's work preparing for statutory regulation of our profession," says Dr. Huijun Shen, President of the ATCM.

#### **Voluntary Body with No Statutory Power**

"Now the Government has failed to deliver its promise and has changed its mind from the plan to have herbal medicines, traditional Chinese medicine and acupuncture regulated by the Health Professions Council. Instead it plans to have complementary medicine practitioners registered with a voluntary body with no statutory power – the Complementary and Natural Healthcare Council.

"We demand an explanation from the Government on why it has changed its mind as the CNHC is only a voluntary body with no statutory power. From

the short statement issued by the Health Secretary Andy Burnham today we doubt whether the Government still wants to introduce statutory regulation. We believe that statutory regulation is the best way to safeguard the public. A legal case at the Old Bailey in February 2010, in which a patient suffered from kidney failure and urinary cancer after taking a banned toxic herbal product for 5 years from a bogus practitioner, is due to lack of statutory regulation for our profession. It highlights the necessity and the urgency for the government to introduce statutory regulation. The title of TCM practitioner, as well as herbal medicine practitioner and acupuncturist, must be statutorily protected in order to stop any bogus people from using these titles - a real public danger.

The reports of three Department of Health Working Groups, plus the responses to the two public consultations have shown overwhelming support for statutory regulation essential to safeguard the public. The Department of Health made a proposal for our professions to be regulated by the Health Professions Council (HPC) in 2005 and all the work has been directed towards this.

"In particular, we are deeply worried about the apparent separation of regulating herbal medicine and acupuncture, which is indicated in Mr Andy Burnham statement as two different steps. All our members are qualified traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) practitioners who practise Chinese herbal medicine and acupuncture side by side as two major components of TCM. The Government has promised to regulate TCM as a whole since the first round of public consultation in 2004. We do not want to see TCM to be mutilated again," commented Dr. Shen.

### **Notes to Editors**

Dr. Huijun Shen is available for comment on **07904 150127**, e-mail: [info@atcm.co.uk](mailto:info@atcm.co.uk) , ATCM Tel/Fax: **020 8951 3030**

**The Association of Traditional Chinese Medicine (UK)** represents over 700 trained practitioners of acupuncture and traditional Chinese medicine working throughout the UK, 80% of who are of Chinese origin. Formed in 1994, the ATCM is the largest self-regulatory body for the practice of

traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) including acupuncture. Since 2002, the ATCM has been actively involved in, and remains committed to, the Department of Health move towards statutory regulation of the sector.

All full members of ATCM hold a university, college or other recognised professional qualification at or above BSc level. The website [www.atcm.co.uk](http://www.atcm.co.uk) lists all members and a local practitioner can be found via the website's "Find A Registered Practitioner" search.

Issued on behalf of the ATCM by Phyllis Oberman Consultants, 0203 234 4098, e:  
[po@phyllisoberman.co.uk](mailto:po@phyllisoberman.co.uk) 1.4.10