



The Association of Traditional Chinese Medicine (UK)

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Press Release

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Statutory regulation the best way to safeguard the public

The Association of Traditional Chinese Medicine (UK), ATCM, welcome today's Health Department announcement on the statutory regulation of herbal medicine and traditional Chinese medicine practitioners by Health Professions Council.

Since House of Lords Select Committee report on Complementary and Alternative Medicine in 2000 suggesting a statutory regulation for herbal medicine and acupuncture, the government has worked to introduce such regulation for over 10 years. The Association of Traditional Chinese Medicine UK (ATCM) has been actively involved since 2002 in the work conducted by the Department of Health to impose statutory regulation. "We participated in two Department of Health Statutory Regulation Working Groups, and have been, and remain, committed to the statutory regulation of TCM practitioners" said Dr. Huijun Shen, ATCM President.

Three Health Department Working Group reports as well as two public consultations that demonstrated overwhelming opinion in favour of statutory regulation 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 was directed towards this until April 2010.

"We believe that a statutory regulation is the best way to safeguard the public. The title of TCM practitioners, as well as herbal medicine practitioners and acupuncturists, must be statutorily protected to stop bogus people from using these titles - a real danger to the public" Dr. Shen added.

"We would also like to draw government's attention to the fact that thousands of Chinese practitioners have safely and legally practiced in the UK for many years, many of them may not speak fluent English. While we agree that there should be a language requirement for the registration of new practitioners under the statutory regulatory scheme, a special exemption or transitional arrangement under the 'Grandparenting' scheme should be in place to allow those practitioners, who have practiced in the UK for many years but do not speak perfect

English, to continue to practice under the statutory regulation. It would be unfair and injurious if the statutory regulation will force them to cease their practice and loose their only livelihood” Dr. Shen concluded.

Notes to editors:

Dr. Huijun Shen is the president of the Association of Traditional Chinese Medicine UK (ATCM), who is available for comment on **07904 150127**, e-mail: 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. Founded 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 lists all practising members and a local practitioner can be found via the website’s “Find A Registered Practitioner” search.

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