Register of British Acupuncturists

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INTRODUCTION

Acupuncture has been practised in the United Kingdom for many years, but it has only recently become very popular. Because of this increasing popularity, many people have gone into practice as acupuncturists after attending only very short and inadequate courses of training.

As the law stands at present, anyone can practise acupuncture regardless of qualification, and it should be noted that a training in orthodox western medicine does not qualify a person to practise acupuncture. This is because Chinese acupuncture is based on theories that are very different from western medicine. The acupuncturist needs a thorough training in the theory and practice of Chinese medicine in order to diagnose and treat effectively.

The Register of British Acupuncturists was first published in 1982, combining the three existing registers of practitioners whose training met the necessary requirements of educational standards and expertise. This, the fourth edition, indicates after each practitioners name the organisation/s to which they belong. (BAAR) British Acupuncture Association, (RTCM) Register of Traditional Chinese Medicine or (TAS) Traditional Acupuncture Society.

These are the main professional organisations for practitioners of acupuncture in the United Kingdom. Whilst each has its own identity, all are bound by a common Code of Ethics, pledge to uphold the highest professional standards and all U.K. members are covered by a bloc professional and public liability insurance policy. They meet regularly as the Council for Acupuncture which represents the profession as a whole at a national and local level.

It is essential that only properly qualified practitioners should treat people with acupuncture, because it takes several years of training in acupuncture to understand the changes in energy that cause symptoms to appear. Treatment primarily involves the insertion of very fine needles into one or more of the 1,000 plus points on the surface of the body. The points are chosen after a very detailed first consultation, after which treatment may take anything from 10 minutes to 1 hour. Other forms of treatment include warming the points by burning a dried herb called 'moxa' over them;