



## **Breaking news on the regulation of acupuncture 13.06.2008**

The British Acupuncture Council (BACc) eagerly awaits the publication of the Department of Health Steering Group Report on the Regulation of Acupuncture, Herbal Medicine and Traditional Chinese Medicine. Due to be launched on Monday 16th June, the Report is expected to recommend the statutory regulation of acupuncture through the Health Professions Council as soon as is practicable. This will bring to a successful conclusion a process in which the BACc has been involved for well over a decade and to which it has made a major contribution.

The Report will undoubtedly highlight the need to protect the public from poorly trained practitioners, and will probably set a minimum English language requirement. Long aware of this, the BACc, however, has been in the forefront of setting and promoting standards of excellence for the acupuncture profession. Its educational guidelines, safe practice standards, professional conduct procedures and accreditation body are at least the equivalent in quality of those of professions already regulated. The BACc has been working tirelessly alongside the two other professions of herbal medicine and traditional Chinese medicine to ensure that the transition to statutory regulation would be based on true parity of standards.

Particularly exciting is the Report's likely recommendation that more funding should be made available for research into acupuncture. The growing acceptance of acupuncture is based largely on its successes; the vast majority of referrals come from word of mouth recommendation. While there are a small number of trials which demonstrate conclusively that acupuncture works, the cost of major trials falls beyond the means of the profession itself. An injection of much-needed funding would help to substantiate what many thousands of patients already know to be true - acupuncture is an effective treatment which deserves to stand alongside conventional therapies in the care of the nation's health.



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